

Former MI5 chief reviews *Spectre*, p20

# Prospect

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## The battle of our time

Workers vs pensioners

CHARLES GOODHART  
MANOJ PRADHAN  
PRATYANCHA PARDESHI

*Plus*

Leaving Europe: the biggest  
diplomatic disaster since losing America

ANATOLE KALETSKY

Women can have it all

CATHY NEWMAN

Politicians take too much credit

INTERVIEW: BEN BERNANKE

Will Saudi Arabia fall?

WILLIAM PATEY

*Also* Jesse Norman, Erica Jong, Mervyn King, Paul Collier,  
Yuan Ren, Philip Collins, Sam Tanenhaus, Bronwen Maddox,  
Ken Clarke, Wendell Steavenson, AC Grayling, Edward Docx



When insincerity  
pays p62

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## Foreword

# The battle of our time



Workers versus pensioners—there is no protest banner that yet captures that clash directly, because both groups rightly hurl their rival claims at governments to adjudicate between them. And in Britain at least, governments have so far protected pensioners far more than other groups, not least because they vote. All the same, in a significant piece of work (p28), Charles Goodhart, Manoj Pradhan and Pratyancha Pardeshi argue rightly that the effects of demographic shifts are too often overlooked, that trends of the past 30 years are about to reverse, and that this will lock those of working age in

sustained political combat with those now drawing their pension.

That is not a problem the rest of the European Union has solved, either. As we continue our coverage of arguments on Britain's EU membership, Anatole Kaletsky (p36) and Edward Docx (p16) offer passionate cases for "In." Peter Kellner (p38) finds that the national mood indeed leans that way at the moment, but the majority is vulnerable. The In case has yet to answer well the challenge that the EU is a zone of slower growth, which is struggling to run itself in a way that keeps up with, never mind thrives on, big demographic and technological changes.

However, for a positive account of how governments can respond well to crisis and can push through difficult reform, turn to our interview with Ben Bernanke (p22), and to Mervyn King's review of Bernanke's book (p71)—although King mounts a pointed defence of the UK's role as Lehman Brothers collapsed. In contrast, UK foreign policy is paralysed at the moment by doubt about whether we can usefully intervene in other countries' problems. Paul Collier argues (p54) that aid really can help (and mounts a rare defence of the UK's Department for International Development.) Whether the House of Saud will be toppled has been quietly on British and US officials' desks for decades; William Patey, former UK ambassador to the nation, argues (p58) that it is more resilient than current signs of strain might suggest, but that we need to talk to the leadership, though we don't have to abandon concerns about human rights to do so.

On p42, Philip Collins looks at the way David Cameron is picking his way through such choices, pragmatic to the point of eluding clear definition as a politician. That quality may be frustrating to biographers, but is not a disqualification in a leader; look at Sam Tanenhaus's affectionate account of Hillary Clinton (p14) which still acknowledges the fluidity of her positions. For a harder-edged portrait, do read Jesse Norman's nuanced and eloquent thoughts on Margaret Thatcher (p68) and the latest instalment of Charles Moore's biography of her. And for a portrait that no politician on the planet would want, turn to Barton Swaim's laconic satire (p62) about his time generating industrial quantities of "language" as speechwriter to the Governor of South Carolina.

Are Thatcher and Clinton an exception or can women reach the top and have it all? Cathy Newman (p48) challenges a leading US official's pessimistic answer with the retort that they sometimes can—but it helps if they have a helpful spouse and earn a good sum, too.

*Bronwen Maddox*

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# Contents

## December 2015

### This month

- 05 **If I ruled the world**  
ERICA JONG
- 06 **Recommends**
- 10 **Prospect events**  
Join us at our talks and debates
- 12 **Letters**



### Opinions

- 14 **Hillary: the true outsider**  
SAM TANENHAUS  
*plus* STEPHEN COLLINS'S cartoon strip.
- 15 **Finding God in China**  
YUAN REN
- 16 **Nigel Farage's dream**  
EDWARD DOCX
- 18 **Cruel and unusual times for Labour**  
GISELA STUART
- 20 **The 007 myth is important to Britain**  
JONATHAN EVANS
- 21 **Is the UN capable of tackling climate change?**  
AC GRAYLING

### Interview

- 22 **Ben Bernanke: "we are better placed to cope with a crisis than in 2008"**  
SAMEER RAHIM



### The Prospect Duel

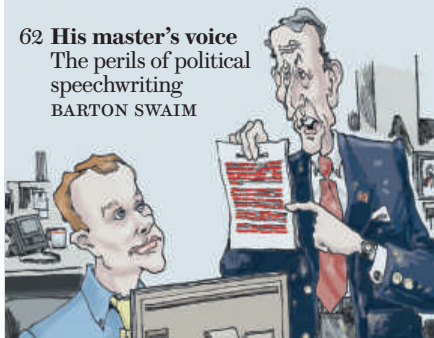
- 24 **Should the government rethink its policy on tax credits?**  
KATE ANDREWS VS KEN CLARKE

### Features

- 28 **The battle of our time**  
Workers vs pensioners  
CHARLES GOODHART, MANOJ PRADHAN AND PRATYANCHA PARDESHI
- 36 **An ugly divorce**  
Brexit will be a diplomatic disaster  
ANATOLE KALETSKY
- 38 **Britain decides**  
Will voters keep the UK in Europe?  
PETER KELLNER



- 42 **Who is the real David Cameron?**  
A leader best when things are broken  
PHILIP COLLINS
- 48 **Having it all**  
Women need to trust their spouses  
CATHY NEWMAN
- 54 **Compassion is not enough**  
Foreign aid should be about jobs  
PAUL COLLIER
- 58 **Is the House of Saud about to fall?**  
There are real signs of strain  
WILLIAM PATEY
- 62 **His master's voice**  
The perils of political speechwriting  
BARTON SWAIM



### Arts & books

- 68 **Mistress of all she surveyed**  
The seeds of Thatcher's downfall  
JESSE NORMAN
- 71 **The Buddha of banking**  
Ben Bernanke, the right man for a crisis  
MERVYN KING
- 72 **The value of deception**  
John le Carré's double life  
JAY ELWES



- 76 **What the Romans really did**  
Mary Beard debunks some hoary myths  
EDITH HALL



### Books in brief

### Life

- 82 **Leith on life** SAM LEITH
- 82 **Life of the mind** ANNA BLUNDY
- 83 **Matters of taste** WENDELL STEAVENSON
- 84 **Wine** BARRY SMITH
- 84 **DIY investor** ANDY DAVIS

### Endgames

- 87 **The generalist crossword**  
DIDYMUS
- 87 **Enigmas & puzzles**  
BARRY R CLARKE
- 88 **The way we were**  
Misbehaviour at work  
IAN IRVINE



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# If I ruled the world

Erica Jong

## Religion is the enemy of the future

As a ruler, the question you need to ask yourself above all is—do you want your society to go backwards or forwards? Do you want to live in the 21st century, or drag it back to the 5th? There are rulers like President Vladimir Putin who clearly want to be the dictator of the world. There are oligarchs who want to rule the world with their own circle of oligarchs. These people are dangerous.

If we want to preserve our democracy, it must be a democracy of all the people. This includes women, people of colour, people of all faiths or no religion. It must be a society in which both genders are eligible for all political positions. It amazes me that the United States hasn't yet had a female President. Hillary Clinton is the best-qualified candidate for President. She has great knowledge of legislation, law, foreign affairs and people's needs.

My kingdom would be secular, as religion is the enemy of the future. If people need traditional practices in order to feel safe, let them keep those practices, as long as they don't kill people who don't observe the same traditions. If people feel happier wearing a headscarf or kippa, so be it. I despise the idea of asking anyone to believe what you believe.

I would ban violence against women. I have been very moved by the plight of the women from the ancient Yazidi sect that so-called Islamic State is trying to exterminate. At a conference in New Mexico, I met two Yazidi women, one a lawyer, the other a surgeon, who had operated on young girls raped so many times they could not be repaired.

Given the number of children in the world who are in distress, we must stop compelling women to have kids. Our planet cannot sustain the people we already have. China's one child policy was draconian, but made some sense when the majority of Chinese were starving. Now that policy has been changed because of unintended consequences such as the murder of female infants. I would suggest that in my kingdom people have one child, and adopt a second.

When I became a grandmother, I came to understand that all the children

in the world are my children. I recently published a poem called "Child on the Beach" about the three-year-old who was found drowned on the beach in Turkey. You look at these children and you think "this could be my grandchild, and what are we doing about it?" We are not addressing the root causes of the problem. If I ruled the world, we would.

We desperately need to get over our embarrassment about sex education. In my kingdom we will create a structure that allows people to communicate about sex. Simply taking kids into drug stores and buying them condoms isn't enough. My daughter Molly Jong-Fast wrote a very funny essay about that—"They Had Sex So I Didn't Have To." Parents are often as shy of discussing sex as their children. We need courses that include both generations and they need to be led by psychiatrists or social workers who understand shyness and shame.

If I ruled the world, I wouldn't attempt to dictate people's sexuality. There are people who are more comfortable with monogamous relationships—and then there are people who like polyamory. I would never try to legislate around anything to do with sexual choices. As long as people don't hurt others or compel them. In the past "moral values" have been used to compel others to behave the way they do. Most of us want a partner who supports us emotionally. That person may also be your sexual or romantic partner, or that person may be a friend. I would never try to dictate the nature of that relationship.

I've met many people who struggle to define their sexuality and even their gender. How can society make laws about such painful struggles? In the case of gender assignment, the state should step back. Gender is personal, not political.

I am totally opposed to censorship. I would never force anyone to read my books or anyone else's. I think we should all read as much as we can. The more we know different points of view, the more we are able to understand human beings. Even Chairman Mao's *Little Red Book* and Hitler's *Mein Kampf* are enlightening. We may disagree but even disagreement is salutary. **P**

© Erica Mann Jong 2015

Interview by Serena Kutchinsky. Erica Jong's latest book "Fear of Dying" is published by Canongate



# Prospect recommends

## Things to do this month

### Art

#### Artist and Empire

Tate Britain, 25th November to 10th April 2016

Following the recent stirring but not altogether satisfying Tate show *Fighting History*, *Artist and Empire* offers visitors another conceptually ambitious exhibition. It asks how the making and sustaining of the British Empire affected artists and collectors throughout its territories. The timescale is huge—from the 16th century to the present day—and the exhibition reaches pink patches once spread around the globe, encompassing the British Isles, North America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa. The show suggests imperial visual culture arose from a combination of propaganda and resistance as well as patronage. Works by Anthony van Dyck, and George Stubbs are shown alongside Maori pieces and Indian miniatures. In the 20th century, the work of Jamini Roy and Uzo Egonu represent growing nationalist artistic movements in Bengal and Nigeria, while contemporary British artists like Hew Locke and Andrew Gilbert confront the difficult legacies of colonialism at home.

#### Elisabeth Frink: The Presence of Sculpture

Djanogly Gallery, Nottingham Lakeside Arts, 25th November to 28th February 2016

In 1952, while still a student at Chelsea School of Art, Elisabeth Frink, one of Britain's most significant post-war sculptors, was commissioned to make a statue of St John Bosco for a Catholic church. From then on creating works for the public realm represented an important strand in her work. This major exhibition of over 70 publicly-commissioned works encompasses her distinctive animals, heads and the metamorphic bird-beast shapes she developed, as well as archive material.

#### Fig-2, weeks 48, 49 and 50

ICA Studio, 30th November to 20th December

In January, ICA Studio and Outset Contemporary Art Fund launched



*Mahadaji Sindhia entertaining British officers with a Nautch (a dancing girl), circa 1815-1820*

*fig-2*. Curated by Fatos Üstek, this revisiting of *fig-1*, a year-long experiment offering weekly exhibitions devised by Mark Francis and Jay Jopling in 2000, has presented work by a stimulating array of established and emerging artists, from multiple disciplines. The last three weeks feature sound artist Seth Ayyaz, paintings by Manuel Mathieu, winner of the *fig-2* Student Open Call and a film by the project's opening artist Laura Eldret.

Emma Crichton-Miller

### Theatre

#### Hangmen

Wyndham's Theatre, 1st December to 5th March 2016

Martin McDonagh's first new play in London for 10 years has provided the Royal Court—where it was a five-star sell-out in September—with a transfer to the West End. Britain's last and most prolific hangman, Albert Pierrepont, makes a guest appearance in the Oldham pub of his rival noose-man, the fictional Harry Wade, shortly after the abolition of the death penalty in 1965.

Harry, played with a pale-faced,

downbeat insouciance by David Morrissey, is regaling his regulars about past exploits and future plans when a young Londoner, Mooney (Johnny Flynn), turns up in search of lodging and possibly revenge. But revenge for what, or for whom? And what has happened to the landlady's daughter or the social prospects of Harry's sidekick on the trapdoor, Syd (Reece Shearsmith) from Halifax? In this razor sharp period piece, McDonagh shows his gift for idiomatic dialogue and dramatic surprise through his cross-Pennine characters as easily as he does through his Irish deadbeats. The play feels like an illicit treat.

#### Les Liaisons Dangereuses

Donmar Warehouse, 11th December to 13th February 2016

Christopher Hampton wrote his fine stage play in the mid-1980s, but it's unlikely that his brilliant broadsides and seductive salvos (filleted from an 18th-century French novel) will have wilted. He created a cruel and sexy comedy of feeling and artifice. Dominic West and Janet McTeer are the conspiratorial ex-lovers, Vicomte de Valmont and the Marquise de Merteuil, while Michelle Dockery exchanges the cloche hats and fin-

ery of Lady Mary in *Downton Abbey* for the furbelows of the virtuous Madame de Tourvel.

#### Into the Woods

Royal Exchange, Manchester, 4th December to 16th January 2016

Last year's movie of Stephen Sondheim's glorious pantomime inevitably lost some of the 1986 show's wit, sharpness and theatrical focus. Time to recover at the Exchange, an ideal immersive setting for getting lost in the woods with the witch, the wolf, the barren baker's wife, Cinderella and Rapunzel. Inspired by Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment*, the show is both serious and delightful, and contains some of Sondheim's best lyrics: "Careful the things you say, children will listen." Michael Coveney

### Classical

#### Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra plays Sibelius

Birmingham Town Hall, 10th December

Hearing the Helsinki Philharmonic play Sibelius is like hearing Laurence Olivier speaking Shakespeare, or Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau singing lieder—▶



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**Cinematic delirium: A scene from *The Forbidden Room***

it's unquestionably, absolutely right. They orchestra brings Sibelius's 150th anniversary year to a gloriously idiomatic close this December under chief conductor John Storgards, with a programme that offers a condensed tour of the composer's life in music. The colourful tone poem *En Saga* and folk-inspired "Karelia Suite" frame Sibelius's monumental *Seventh Symphony*, with the added bonus of the composer's *Violin Concerto*, performed here by the as-yet-unknown winner of the Sibelius Violin Competition, announced just days before the concert.

#### **Stockhausen & Boulez**

*Southbank Centre, 5th December*  
Boulez and Stockhausen—two names that strike fear into the hearts of all but the most open-earred of classical concert-goers. They are also giants: bold experimenters and path-finders for a generation whose musical rewards are all the sweeter for being hard-won. The Southbank Centre is offering the perfect opportunity to take the plunge, with an evening concert by the London Sinfonietta preceded by an afternoon study-event unpacking the mysteries of Stockhausen's provocative *Hymnen*, with Radio 3's Tom Service and the Southbank's Gillian Moore.

#### **Academy of Ancient Music: Bach's Christmas Oratorio**

*Barbican Centre, 22nd December*  
You can't walk past a concert hall in December without tripping over a Messiah. If you "Rejoice in the Lamb" one too many times, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* offers an excellent alternative. This tender

and magical telling of the Christmas story is the softer cousin of Bach's stern Passion settings, a joyous musical celebration. Period ensemble the Academy of Ancient Music's performance promises to be one of the best this year, with soloists including soprano Susan Gritton, tenor James Gilchrist and rising star Ashley Riches.

*Alexandra Coghlan*

## **Film**

December's blockbusters should be able to draw everyone in. There's fun for all the family with *Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens* (18th December). Comedy comes from Tina Fey and Amy Poehler in *Sisters* (18th December), and Ron Howard's adaptation of Nathaniel Philbrick's *In the Heart of the Sea* (26th December) assumes the role of the US-style big-action Boxing Day release.

Away from the mainstream you can also find:

#### **The Forbidden Room**

*11th December*

A film by Canadian Guy Maddin never provides an A-road narrative but there are such pleasures in the meandering by-ways. His latest film travels to the margins of sexual obsession and is captured with his particular genius for old film styles and hues, so convincing you can't believe it wasn't made in some 1930s (or 1970s) European studio.

Stories within stories take us from warm pink caves and Canadian backwoods to a sweaty submarine, with amnesiac women and severe father-figures (like the chief

of the Red Wolves or the on-train psychiatrist) all playing their part.

Along with Geraldine Chaplin and Udo Kier, Maddin winds in a large cast, including Charlotte Rampling and Mathieu Amalric. It's all a dream—my kind of dream, although for others the cinephile delirium could wear thin.

#### **Peggy Guggenheim: Art Addict**

*11th December*

An art patron is more important than an art collector, observes performance artist Marina Abramović, in this entertaining documentary of Peggy Guggenheim's life (1898-1979). Now best remembered for her museum in Venice, Guggenheim was not entirely a privileged princess—although Guggenheim "poverty" was relative, as another witness recalls.

Director Lisa Immordino Vreeland counterpoints interviews with stills and snippets of a 1970s recording she discovered of Guggenheim chatting with biographer Jacqueline Weld. That interview itself is less revealing than the images of a determined young woman who travelled the world and had lovers from Max Ernst to Samuel Beckett. She funded Jackson Pollock's work, championed women artists and understood that people need an intimate connection even with the most abstract art. Yet she was also, as dealer Larry Gagosian notes, her own greatest creation.

*Francine Stock*

## **Opera**

#### **Eugene Onegin**

*Royal Opera House, 19th December to 7th January 2016*

Kasper Holten's production of Tchaikovsky's opera received mixed reviews on its 2013 debut. For some commentators the body doubles, and theatrical exposition of memory over-literalised the work. *Eugene Onegin* is a simple, timeless story of unrequited love and too-late remorse and thus needs little embellishment. John Cranko's blistering ballet version is as visceral and direct as Onegin's pistol shot but the opera delivers volleys of magnificent music. To bolster this revival Holten has brought in real Russians to deliver the authentic goods. Conductor Semyon Bychkov will bring his usual attack to the orchestra and with the formidable Siberian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky in the title role there is little doubt that

this will be a memorable and powerful run.

#### **A Christmas Carol**

*Wales Millennium Centre, 18th to 20th December*

Not so much a concert performance as a one-man opera, Iain Bell's distillation of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* for a tenor and a chamber orchestra is an extraordinary accomplishment. Commissioned by Houston Grand Opera where it premiered last year, it is only Bell's second opera, following *A Harlot's Progress*.

#### **Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci**

*Royal Opera House, 3rd December to 1st January 2016*

Mascagni and Leoncavallo's greatest verismo operas get a fresh makeover and an update to late 20th-century southern Italy in this double bill for the Royal Opera House. Damiano Michieletto directs and Antonio Pappano conducts a first class cast including Eva-Maria Westbroek and Aleksandr Antonenko in an evening of dark passions, jealousy and revenge.

*Neil Norman*

## **Science**


#### **Festival of the Spoken Nerd: Just for Graphs!**

*Dates and venues throughout December, www.festivalofthespokennerd.com*

This is a perfect panto alternative for the geek in your life—and the last chance in 2015 to catch this stand-up comedic celebration of science and graphs. Hosts include the explosive experimentalist Steve Mould and the number-crunching Matt Parker. Expect exponential fun.

#### **The Lord Treasurer of Botany**

*Linnean Society of London, 2nd December*

The Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus devised the naming system for living things that we homo sapiens still use today. In 1784 an unknown medical student called James Edward Smith bought up Linnaeus's collections and founded the influential Linnean Society of London. Savour rare access to this historic gem to learn how Smith, the son of a cloth merchant, rose to become one of the leading botanists of his time, as well as a tutor to royalty. 

*Anjana Ahuja*



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# Prospect events



Simon Heffer and Oliver Kamm will debate whether there is such a thing as correct English

## Discussions and debates

*Prospect's* first issue was published in October 1995. Our discussions and debates this winter will examine themes that the magazine has explored consistently over the past 20 years.

### Wednesday 25th November The language wars: Simon Heffer vs Oliver Kamm

Is there such a thing as correct English? Does it matter if we split infinitives or fuse participles? In a live performance of the *Prospect* "Duel," journalists and authors Simon Heffer and Oliver Kamm argue the pros and cons.

6.30pm, British Academy. £12/£10 (subscribers) For tickets: [www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/events](http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/events)

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### Saturday 28th November Hay Winter Festival Money grows on trees: Paul Mason talks to *Prospect*



The Governor of the Bank of England has warned about the financial risks of climate change. Paul Mason, Economics Editor of Channel 4 News, talks to *Prospect's* Serena Kutchinsky and previews the UN Climate Change Summit in Paris.

The Hay Winter Festival will run from 27th to 29th November. For more information visit [www.hayfestival.com/winterweekend](http://www.hayfestival.com/winterweekend)

### Wednesday 2nd December John Kay



Join *Prospect*, Martin Gilbert, CEO of Aberdeen Asset Management and John Kay for a discussion of his latest book, *Other People's Money: Masters of the Universe or Servants of the People?* Kay argues that the finance world's perceived profitability is not the creation of new wealth, but the sector's appropriation of wealth—of other people's money.

A limited number of places will be available for subscribers. City of London venue TBA. To register your interest please email [events@prospectmagazine.co.uk](mailto:events@prospectmagazine.co.uk)

### Tuesday 8th December: Adair Turner: The dangers of debt



Join Bronwen Maddox, Editor of *Prospect*, for an evening with Adair Turner, former Chairman of the Financial Services Authority, to discuss his provocative new book, *Between Debt and the Devil: Money, Credit, and Fixing Global Finance*. Turner says that private debt drives global economic instability, and the idea that credit growth is needed to drive economic progress is a myth.

A limited number of tickets will be available for our subscribers to buy. To register your interest before they go on sale, please email [events@prospectmagazine.co.uk](mailto:events@prospectmagazine.co.uk) Westminster venue TBA

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What makes matters worse is that the help needed to avoid these deaths is often available, but it's just not getting through to the most vulnerable. While it is important that we concentrate on getting the right policies in place, whether that's support via the welfare system or via the right tariffs from energy providers, without effective implementation these things will not work.

This winter Turn2us are running our No Cold Homes campaign to raise awareness of the practical help that's available. From listening to the people that we help, it is clear that too many suffer in silence or ignore the problem altogether. People who don't seek assistance from their energy provider, or don't know the provider can help, do not approach their water company, bank, or council.

We believe that there are two immediate priorities in changing this situation. Firstly, it's crucial to think about a more holistic approach to support. Reducing bills for

those who are struggling is great, but how much more effective could it be when accompanied by advice on managing personal finances? Secondly is the importance of working collaboratively across sectors to help those who are struggling. The voluntary and community sector has a huge role to play, especially as business becomes more and more digitised. But charities, community groups and others need to join forces to get through to those hardest to reach.

Charities like Turn2us already have contact with millions of people—the same people businesses are trying to help with social tariffs and other schemes. The more we work together the more help will get to where it's needed. That's why we want to work with you to help support those struggling to make ends meet.

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# Opinions

Sam Tanenhaus

## The true outsider

If Hillary can survive a nine hour Congressional grilling, she can survive anything



When it comes to choosing presidents Americans have preferences that often override differences of ideology and even party. We prefer them tall, trim, clean-shaven, with a full head of hair. Athletes rather than scholars: “star of the team, most popular boy, grinning reluctant stud,” as an envious, glowering Richard Nixon characterises his boss, President Dwight Eisenhower, in Robert Coover’s novel *The Public Burning*. It seems silly—until we realise how often the formula works: John F Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, both George Bushes, Barack Obama.

There is no formula for women, because none has been elected or even nominated by one of the two major parties. Thus, the singularity of Hillary Clinton, who is making her second try for the presidency, and her second as the Democratic front-runner. Her own role model, she has said, is Eleanor Roosevelt, who once said, “I would rather be chloroformed than run for office.” Clinton hasn’t always matched Roosevelt’s upper-crust aplomb. But after a bruising spring

and summer in which her poll numbers plunged, and a surprise rival, Bernie Sanders outflanked her on the left, she seems to have broken through to new mastery, and self-mastery.

The pivotal moment—or moments, there were many—happened on 22nd October during a long-awaited, wildly hyped event: Clinton’s appearance as a witness before a House of Representatives committee formed to investigate—actually, to re-litigate—the death of the US Ambassador to Libya and three other Americans in an attack on two compounds in Benghazi, Libya, on 11th September, 2012.

The four were killed on Clinton’s watch as Secretary of State, and the episode had been examined exhaustively, in seven investigations, 13 hearings, and 50 briefings. The latest inquest had turned up a fresh controversy: Clinton’s use of a private email server to conduct State Department business. Democrats accused Republicans of seeking not answers but an opening to

attack Clinton’s presidential campaign. Republicans fiercely denied it, until the number two House Republican, Kevin McCarthy, bragged on television that the investigation had hurt Clinton’s poll numbers. With that admission everything turned. Clinton, famous for “doing her homework,” came prepared, and exhibited regal calm as she parried questions for nine hours.

When it was over, it was the seven Republicans who slunk away, looking beaten, while Clinton, four days shy of her 68th birthday, glowed through congratulatory hugs and then invited staff to her Georgetown house for a celebratory dinner of Indian takeaway, with beer and wine. Meanwhile, cash donations flowed into her campaign. The hearing “was really more of a telethon,” the comedian, Stephen Colbert said, before interviewing Clinton on his popular late-night show; the two discussed their favourite political dramas. (Hillary binge-watches *House of Cards*). Television has always been her best medium. A skilled mimic, she did a funny Donald



Trump on *Saturday Night Live* (she played a bartender). Suddenly, Hillary—cuttingly described as “likeable enough” by Obama in a 2008 debate—tops the field in “relatability,” this year’s buzzword.

The explanation? She’s grown. Once seen as the entitled half of the nation’s First Couple (“buy one, get one free,” her husband half-joked when he first ran in 1992), Hillary—who ran in 2008 as a kind of American “Iron Lady”—has since matured into a battle-softened Everywoman. During her midsummer doldrums, amid loudening talk of her soaring “unfavourables,” few noted she had been the Gallup Poll’s “most admired woman” 17 of the last 18 years, overtaken only by Laura Bush after 9/11.

Like all good politicians, Clinton knows where her base is, and like all good leaders knows when to follow. When she refused to yield to Obama after the race was numerically lost in 2008, some accused her of vanity, or selfishness. In fact, she was staying true to her supporters, who had watched her bang up against the glass ceiling, heard

the snickers about her hair and ensembles, felt her setbacks as their own... “Her voters were angry, they felt insulted, they had to be coaxed along,” John Heilemann and Mark Halperin wrote in their election book *Game Change*.

In a polarised and fractured time, Clinton’s pitch to those voters has become even

**“Women form the most powerful constituency in American politics and have voted in greater numbers than men in the last 13 elections”**

more direct—and is shrewdly calculated. Women, who form the most powerful constituency in American politics, have voted in greater numbers than men in each of the last 13 elections, going back to 1964. Women also “lean Democratic by 52-36 per cent,” according to Pew Research, the demogra-

phers’ gold standard, because the party is seen as pro-choice *ergo* pro-women. If Clinton is nominated, those numbers could climb higher.

In truth, Clinton did possibly fumble Benghazi and may have been miscast at the State Department. But domestic policy decides most elections, and Clinton’s record is matchless, dating back to the landmark legal writing she did on children’s rights in her twenties. Even her botched healthcare overhaul in the 1990s, during the first Clinton administration, today seems the critical first step toward the programme passed by Obama 16 years later.

Why, she was asked during the Democratic debate (another of her October wins), should voters hand her a dynastic “crown” when the homespun Sanders is the ideal “outsider” candidate, suited to the moment? How better to send the outsider message, Clinton coolly replied, “than [by] electing the first woman President”?

*Sam Tanenhaus is an American writer. His next book will be a biography of William F Buckley Jr*

Yuan Ren

## Finding God in China

Chinese people are looking for a respite from modern life



I recently had dinner with a primary school friend I had not seen for almost a decade, and was surprised to learn that she had become a practicing Buddhist. As a mother of a seven-year-old, I was even more surprised to hear that she spends her Saturdays with a group of Buddhist friends, studying and talking about philosophy.

What made her interested in Buddhism? I asked.

“I needed meaning in my life,” she said, “I felt like the walking dead before that—I would go to work each day and then go home. I questioned what my purpose was in life. Was it to eat and sleep each day?”

We’d grown up in the same Beijing neighbourhood—she was merely a few years older than me. Yet she was not the first of my childhood friends who had lost direction in their twenties.

Driven on by parents and the force of the Chinese education system, childhood can seem like constant preparation for the next exam. Later comes marriage and children, which is a goal for many of my friends now—yet more than a few of them feel stuck in unchallenging middle-rung jobs that offer a stable wage, but little else.

Many young Chinese are looking for a respite from the banality of such a life. For most, escape lies in social media and television. But a small number of others are turn-

ing to religion.

Growing up in China during the 1990s, Communist ideas were dominant in my schooling and atheism was the default. Even so, Christianity started to find a following among people of my mother’s generation. I remember hearing about the aunties who had converted to “Jesus” after retirement. No one took them very seriously: it was what certain middle-aged

**“I remember hearing about the aunties who had converted to ‘Jesus’ after retirement. No one took them very seriously”**

women did when they had a lot of spare time and little to do.

Today, it’s not only the older generation that has time for religion. While the majority of mainland Chinese remain atheist, research shows that 5 per cent of China’s population identify themselves as Christian. Young Christian “converts” of my generation are particularly active: undergraduate friends tell me that they are often approached by religious students on campus, albeit in a hush-hush man-

ner since open evangelism is not permitted. But there is clearly a thriving religious community. Even while I have been sitting here writing this piece in a university café, a 25-year-old Chinese student has been having a Bible studies lesson on the next table with an American.

China’s own “homegrown” beliefs: Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism, are also gaining adherents among young people. Buddhism is the most practiced of the three, but its following is mainly from older age groups. One PhD student who studied in Taiwan says that Buddhism classes were widely offered by temples, and the sense of community was strong.

The same is missing here in Beijing, but exists within Christian communities. For a generation of only children, this camaraderie can act as a strong draw, particularly when students are thrust into a new city with little family support. This was the case for Zhang, who joined a Christian congregation as an undergraduate. She was so overwhelmed by the “immense kindness” of fellow believers, that it made her feel like she had a new family.

Admiration and fascination for European and American culture remain widespread in China: in recent years, young people have started to celebrate Halloween, Christmas and even Thanksgiving ►

with eagerness. Religion may also hold the same appeal.

"But those who really believe and understand their faith are still a very tiny minority," says my childhood Buddhist

friend. It's difficult to know whether a turn towards religion is a true cry for spiritual guidance, or merely a trend. For me at least, it is a struggle to comprehend that the atheism we all grew up with—where the

very idea of God was ludicrous—can be so easily wiped away.

*Yuan Ren is a former editor of Time Out Beijing, and is now based in Beijing as a writer*

Edward Docx

## Nigel Farage's dream

There are two problems with the EU debate—the "in" campaign, and the "out" campaign



The European Union referendum now lies splayed across the political event horizon like a giant jellyfish with which we are all soon going to have to wrestle. History will explain how Nigel Farage, whom I have interviewed for this magazine, tortured the Conservative Party into wasting the nation's time and energy on what is essentially a Tory in-house disagreement. But this is his dream come true; and what a many-tentacled nightmare it turns out to be.

Make no mistake: in less than a year, Great Britain could be out of the EU and no longer Great or, indeed, Britain. David Cameron's departure will surely follow Brexit, which will also be followed by Scotland's attempted split from Britain. The splenetic strain of the Conservative Party will be left running Little England—for that is what we will be—and its business for decades to come will be the treaty-by-treaty renegotiation of our relationship with every other country in the world.

Why are we in danger of sleep walking to Brexit? Two reasons: the "in" campaign and the "out" campaign. The former is tangled, confused and complacent; the latter replete with experience and a fierce vitality.

The "ins" as presently configured, are, of course, bedeviled by macro politics that stall and occlude their purposes... What concessions can the Prime Minister get from the EU? When will he start campaigning? How exactly does all this play into George Osborne's succession plans for himself? Which cabinet members will campaign to leave the EU? How can they then be part of the government? Where is Boris Johnson in all of this? Theresa May? But let us for a moment take the "ins" at face value.

Their first problem is their ostensible leader. Stuart Rose looks and sounds like the great chief executive of Marks and Spencer he once was—focussed and wiry, he radiates competence, work ethic and a steady mercantile understanding of high-street footfall. He is the opposite of what the "in" campaign needs. At the launch, which I attended, he seemed under-prepared for the political fray and actively to dislike cheerleading, rhetoric or enthusiastic case-making of any kind. He looked and sounded cautious, unwilling or dragooned.

His speech was poorly structured, poorly written and poorly delivered—all in a salt-dry voice. Certainly, the "ins" need Stuart Rose on hand to make the many calm and clinching business points. But surely the leader's job is to promote the case with warm and passionate conviction as well as authenticity. Even if—as with Rose—all he is doing is holding the fort until Cameron and Osborne mobilise.

Then there's the authority question. Will Straw, the "in" campaign's Executive Director, might one day be a force for good in the country. He's decent, willing and impossible to dislike. But he looks and sounds out of his depth. At a recent debate, the first between the campaign leaders, he

**"Make no mistake: in less than a year, Great Britain could be out of the EU and no longer Great or, indeed, Britain"**

was properly pitted against Dominic Cummings, the battle-hungry director of what will surely become the main "out" ("Vote Leave") campaign. This was Straw's first real public test. He did not do well. As soon as the debate opened to questions, it became clear to the audience that Straw was not across the detail. He was unable, for example, to counter the demonstrably false figure of the "out" side that it costs £55m a day to keep us in Europe and instead the chair had to do it for him; and then—staggeringly—he had not even heard of the Rotterdam Effect.

What's the Rotterdam Effect I hear you cry? Agreed: it's not something most people would be expected to know. Not unless you were, say, the Executive Director of the "in" campaign. The Rotterdam Effect is the contention that lots of goods traded into and out of the vast port of Rotterdam are counted as trade with Europe even though their onward destination may well be non-EU; and that this therefore distorts the figures around our reliance on EU trade.

So, by way of contrast, to the pre-emi-

nent "out" campaign group—"Vote Leave." What of them? Straw's nemesis, Dominic Cummings, is ferocious, committed, unafraid, serious, passionate and utterly certain of his cause. (His reputation from the time he spent working as Michael Gove's Senior Advisor at the Department for Education is that he's all of these things to the point of combustion). Meanwhile, he knows everything—and I mean everything—about two subjects in particular: Europe and referendums.

On the former, Cummings's blog has long been the world's most forensic source as to why the EU is deleterious to Britain. And on the latter, he has fought and won campaigns and referendums for large parts of his adult life. He was the director of the "no" campaign to stop Britain joining the euro between 1999 and 2002; he was co-founder of the campaign that won the referendum on saying "no" to the North East Regional Assembly.

There is background and personal history here, too. The strategic leader of the "in" campaign is the long-suffering Ryan Coetzee, who was one of Nick Clegg's most senior aides. Meanwhile, it was Dominic Cummings, who tore into the Liberal Democrats (they ▶



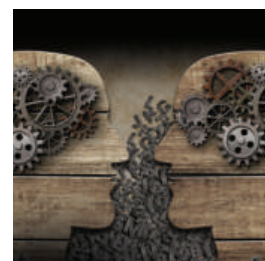
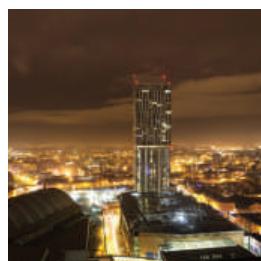
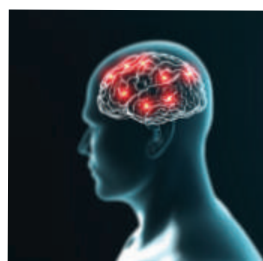
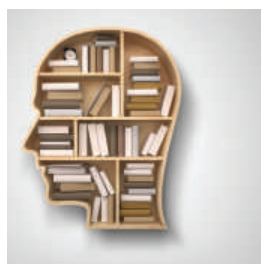
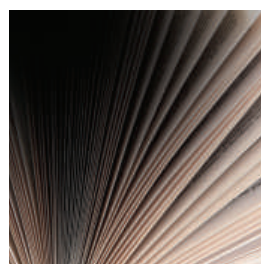
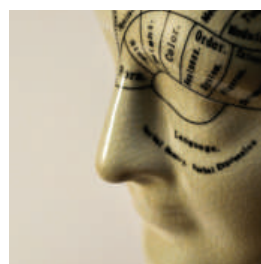
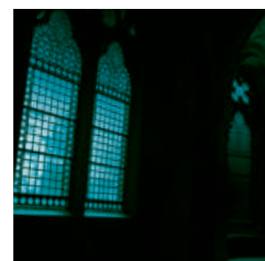


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accused him of leaking a series of emails) after the announcement of their universal free school meals policy in the last parliament. The two men are not best friends. But Cummings doesn't care about pleasing people. His main purpose on Earth, as he sees it, is to cut waste, to attack otiosity, streamline departments, get things done. If he is an idealist, it is because he dreams not of ideological consummations but of burnished and streamlined political systems.

On the night, he won the live debate against Straw by some distance and without really concentrating. He had long answers and short answers, killer facts and could quote at will from the sub-clauses of reports. Had the whole decision been on a show of hands that night, we'd be out of Europe by now.

The point is this: for the "outs," the EU referendum is their life's great work and moment, this is the single issue above even party politics on which the fate of their idea of nationhood hangs. For the "ins," this is little more than a political annoyance that

they are desperate to put behind them so they can get on with what they see as the real business of government and the more gleeful pursuit of their own legacy (Cameron) or career (Osborne). On the surface, the two campaigns look as though they're balanced; but one is shallow and irritable and hamstrung and the other is deep and convinced and kinetic.

**"He had the impatient demeanour of a child prodigy waiting to get started on a maths paper"**

The real danger is that when the phoney war is over, the "ins" will find themselves outgunned, outflanked and totally unprepared for the ferocity and skill with which they will be assailed. Which would be a disaster, because the "outs" are right about one thing: the EU referendum is not merely an annoyance and the fate of

the nation really does hang on the outcome.

Which brings us back to the macro-politics. Cameron's entanglement is as neat as it is nasty: he can't start campaigning for "in" because that ruins his negotiating position with Europe; but whatever the outcome of the negotiations, they won't be enough for the "outs," so the Prime Minister will then have to campaign for "in" regardless; which the EU already knows and is thus disinclined to give him anything substantial in negotiations. But still, there are dozens of positive, persuasive, emotional and factual reasons to believe that—on balance—Britain really is far better off and stronger in Europe. And so the "ins" cannot afford to let the "outs" make all the running.

Jellyfish are simple, brainless creatures but there is one famously lethal species whose sting is so painful that its victims often go into cardiac arrest before the deadly toxins even have time to take hold.

*Edward Docx is an author and Associate Editor of Prospect*

**Gisela Stuart**

## Cruel and unusual times

First question—what is the Labour party for?



These are cruel and unusual times for many Labour MPs. Some of us still recall that even the worst day in government is better than the best day in opposition. But these memories are fading. There is anger in the Labour party and, without focus and purpose, that anger will become destructive.

Jeremy Corbyn, our leader, has a massive mandate from Labour's membership and its group of wider supporters. But—and this is hardly a state secret—he and the Parliamentary Labour Party aren't quite marching to the same tune. That's as much a problem for the leader as it is for his followers. Both sides need to do a bit of "retuning." There are a few things we need to do.

Let's start with asking the right questions, starting with: what is the Labour Party for?

Most MPs will have done school assemblies. When the bright 11-year-old gets up and says "why did you go into politics Miss?"—it's tempting to say because I wanted to change the world for the better.

But unlike joining a pressure group or a faith-based institution, politics requires making choices, balancing competing interests and accepting that making things happen is just as important as having ideals.

The nature and purpose of the Labour Party is to challenge vested interests and

acknowledge that, at times, only collective action will do. It also gives you a chance to point out that government only has the money it can raise by taxes.

MPs need to have more of these fundamental conversations. We've done too

**"We've done too much searching for the pithy slogan, with few insights and even fewer precise ideas of what to do"**

much searching for the pithy slogan, with few insights and even fewer precise ideas of what to do.

For example, helping the poorest and getting more money into their pockets can be done in two ways: by increasing benefits or by looking at the cost of things which disproportionately affect less well-off people. If Labour were to say "we focus on the cost of housing, energy and food and combine this with working on skills and employability," then the party would have a coherent narrative. Only then will those emails from constituents and individual cases of hardship read out by the party's leader at the despatch box form part of a coherent political narrative.

ical narrative.

Perhaps more importantly, Jeremy Corbyn's team needs to talk to people who are instinctively not on their side. Jeremy Corbyn had remarkable success in packing public halls to overflowing, but the audiences were already supporters of his cause. Ideas need to be tested in hostile, critical environments. If the party insulates itself from intellectual challenge, it will get nowhere.

Being against things and questioning the motives of the other side is a necessary part of being an effective opposition—but alone, it's not sufficient to put you in Downing Street.

*Gisela Stuart is Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston*



*"I've read the blurb on all of them"*

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Film review: Jonathan Evans

# The 007 myth is important to Britain

The former head of MI5 reviews *Spectre*



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**“Foreign services are fully aware of the Bond mystique and that does the UK no harm at all in intelligence circles”**

*Spectre* is the 26th James Bond film (including David Niven’s outing as Bond in the parody version of *Casino Royale* and Sean Connery’s *Never Say Never Again*) and the local cinema where I saw it was running 21 showings a day in the opening week. You can’t keep a formula running that long and so successfully unless you are tapping into something pretty deep in the male (and maybe female) psyche. We all like to see good triumphing over evil after the dangers and trials of battle and we love it when the boy wins the girl and they drive off into the sunset. Bond films are meant to be fun and *Spectre* plays it safe by including all the elements you’d expect.

As entertainment it works just fine. The Bond myth is, of course, rather important to British Intelligence. Members of the agencies go to the movies as much as anyone else and no doubt feel a certain pride in seeing their work portrayed in such a heroic light. Equally, foreign services are fully aware of the Bond mystique and that does the UK no harm at all in intelligence circles. Though James Bond is meant to be about MI6, all three agencies—MI6, MI5 and GCHQ—get a bit of reflected glamour. It’s not exactly a documentary about everyday life in the intelligence agencies, to say

the least, but if you don’t want to talk in any detail about what you actually do day-to-day, then having your agency personified in a daring, glamorous, sexy and successful super spy, protecting the country (and the world) against evil plots, is a pretty good alternative. After all, the main task of the agencies really is to protect the country against evil plots.

Needless to say, if James Bond were the real thing and undertook a single operation anything like those in *Spectre* he would

**“There is nothing here that cannot be sorted out with a bit of black humour, a lot of explosives and some help from Q”**

spend the rest of his career shut away in the office going to tortuous meetings with his lawyers and trying to keep himself out of prison. But part of the Bond charisma is that he is in opposition to the bureaucratic powers that be. That is very much the case in *Spectre* where ghastly Whitehall warrior Max Denbigh is seeking to merge MI5

and MI6 and replace Bond-style shenanigans with an all encompassing global surveillance capability as part of the “9 Eyes” intelligence alliance. Of course, in real life ghastly Whitehall warriors do pop up from time to time and propose the merger of MI5 and MI6, and some countries (but not those with serious intelligence capabilities) do advocate merging national agencies into an international (usually European) *blanc-mange*. And post-Snowden, Denbigh’s surveillance ambitions (“We watch everyone”) will have a certain resonance. But fortunately there is nothing here that cannot be sorted out with a bit of black humour, a lot of explosives and some help from Ben Wishaw’s Q, who happily has a larger part in this film than he did in *Skyfall*. It does say something about our current collective anxieties that the global catastrophe that Bond and Q are working to prevent is not some nuclear explosion or biological attack but the successful implementation of a global surveillance system. Even Bond is fighting cyber-wars now.

*Jonathan Evans was Director-General of MI5 from 2007 to 2013. He is an honorary professor at the University of St Andrews Adam Sisman’s biography of John le Carré is reviewed by Jay Elwes on p72*

AC Grayling

# A global agreement

Is the UN capable of tackling climate change?



When the United Nations was formally established in 1945—the name had already been in use by the Allies during the Second World War—someone said that its purpose was not to take humanity to heaven but to save it from hell. When the 21st “Conference of the Parties” to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meets in Paris on 30th November this year, it will be yet another chapter in the UN’s pursuit of that aim.

Just as there are sceptics about climate change itself, however, there are sceptics about the point of spending large sums on conferences about climate change. Remember how much the Copenhagen conference in December 2009 promised, and how little it delivered? Why not—so ask these sceptics—give the millions of dollars such conferences cost to the scientists working to solve the problem, rather than generating more hot air to add to global warming?

I was in Kyoto in 1997 when the eponymous Protocol on the reduction of greenhouse gases was signed there. My presence was coincidental; I was not at the conference itself, but visiting the Ginkakuji and walking the Tetsugaku no Michi. But all day that US Vice-President Al Gore was present, the air was full of helicopters and the streets were full of police cars blaring their sirens, a manifest irony in the effort to fight the pollution poisoning our world and its future.

Yet the irony was a double irony: for without that miniature hell of various sorts of pollution prompted by the desire to save the planet, we would be in a far worse state. The plain truth is that saving the planet has to be done on a fully international basis, as a concerted effort by all the major polluting par-

ties. It has to be willed by governments and international organisations, because it cannot be done by individuals or by just some in the global community.

Recycling one’s rubbish is a gesture of commitment, but the fitful efforts of individuals do not even nibble at the threat. Given the sheer scale of the threat, what alternative is there to trying for joint action? UN-level endeavour, however ineffective it currently appears to the sceptics, is the only practicable resource.

There is however something that people can do at the national level: which is to encourage, oblige or force their govern-

**“The plain truth is that saving the planet has to be a concerted effort by all the major polluting parties. It cannot be done by individuals”**

ments to commit to realistic targets and to stick to them—at the UN level. For the problem is the reluctance of governments to disadvantage their own economies by regulating to scale back consumption, or to add costs to manufacturing, transport and energy by effective emissions controls. At the time of Kyoto the argument was that rich countries were obliging developing countries to scale back or regulate expensively, and naturally the developing countries objected; yet these developing countries—China and India were principally in the frame—were (and remain) major polluters. Since Kyoto almost all the major polluters have become better able to afford

to take the kind of action that would limit global warming to two degrees above pre-industrial levels. This argument, accordingly, should no longer persuade.

But are the sceptics right to be so dismissive of UN-level efforts? Recall that the UNFCCC’s aims were to help signatory parties to adapt to climate change, to discuss how mitigation of climate-damaging effects could be funded, to develop technologies to help with mitigation and clean-up, and finally to get greenhouse gas emissions down. Kyoto got 37 major industrial nations to agree to targets; it set a target of 5 per cent reduction in emissions below 1990 levels by 2012, and that target has been achieved. Some countries did very well: the UK agreed to a 12.5 per cent reduction, yet a year before the target date had reduced emissions by 27 per cent. Since then a number of countries have resigned from the process; the process itself stumbles, and not nearly enough has been achieved. Like a dance with disaster, there seem to be nearly as many steps backwards as forwards. Some countries—alas, among them Canada and Australia—are among the delinquents not pulling their weight. The former withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol, the latter set itself what were described by Larissa Waters, the Australian Green party senator, as “pathetically weak” targets of 26–28 per cent reductions to 2005 levels by 2030.

The case of Canada is instructive. At Kyoto it agreed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by a modest 6 per cent by 2012; by 2008 it had increased them by 24 per cent. And so it withdrew. If that is how some of the big players are going to behave, the planet is doomed: literally.

*AC Grayling is a philosopher, and Master of the New College of Humanities*

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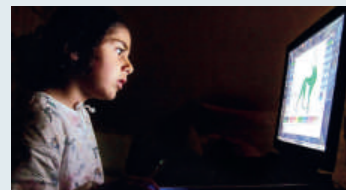
As the last British prisoner is released from Guantanamo Bay, **Lucy Maddox** explains the long-term effects of torture



How can we make refugees feel more welcome? asks **Ismail Einashe**



There is no crisis in literacy—we’re reading more than ever thanks to the internet, says **Frank Furedi**



# Interview



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Sameer Rahim

## Reasons to be cheerful

We are better placed to cope with a crisis than in 2008, says Ben Bernanke



During his time as Chairman of the United States Federal Reserve from 2006 to 2014, Ben Bernanke had to cope with a financial crisis that almost brought down the global banking system, and with the worst recession since the 1930s. In London, *Prospect* spoke to Bernanke about the state of the economy in the US, whether the European Union has treated Greece fairly and Britain's controversial role in his efforts to stabilise the financial system.

When asked whether George Osborne should be credited with achieving growth in the UK, Bernanke said: "As a practical matter, presidents and prime ministers take too much credit and too much blame for economic growth. Fundamentally, growth depends on a variety of factors that leaders don't control, from demography to technological change. Central banks are important for short-term economic growth and I would argue that the Bank of England has been effective in helping to restore growth. I don't

think you can attribute short-term growth to political leaders—not that political decisions aren't important, but in the short run other factors are probably more important."

The Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell has suggested that the Bank's mandate should be widened to be more similar to the Fed's and include full employment and price stability. Did he agree? "I don't know much about the politics of the central bank in the UK," said Bernanke. "It does work for the US. Though I would add that even if the Fed had a single mandate, it probably would not have conducted policy radically differently because throughout the recession and recovery, inflation has been below target."

Bernanke was critical of the European Central Bank's (ECB) initial response to the 2008 crisis. "In the medium term, the EU has lagged behind the UK and the US in using monetary fiscal policies to help recover from the great recession. Fiscal policy has been most austere in Europe compared to

other industrial countries. Monetary policy is now appropriately aggressive, but because of political opposition it took six years for the ECB to follow the US and the UK in introducing Quantitative Easing (QE) and other aggressive policies." By "political opposition" did he mean Germany? "Yes, Germany. In the long term, Europe faces some of the same growth issues as the US and the UK, namely adverse demographics—though Europe's are probably worse—and uncertainty about technological change and productivity growth. So the concerns about long-term growth regarding the US and the UK are, if anything, more serious in Europe."

Bernanke was largely responsible for implementing QE. How does that experiment look now? "It isn't over but I think at this point it looks pretty good. The US and the UK, the two countries that have been most aggressive in using QE, have had the best recoveries. And the area that made the least use of QE, the eurozone, has had the

**Left, Ben Bernanke in 2008 explaining to the House of Representatives Financial Services Committee why Lehman failed**

worst recovery. So there's at least some gross evidence that QE has been effective in avoiding deflation and proving support for economic recovery."

Has one consequence of QE been the pushing up of asset values and increasing inequality? "It remains to be seen. Those who don't like QE have decided they don't like QE. In fact, I think the inequality case against QE is extremely weak. The most important effect of QE over the last few years has been to create jobs. The effects on asset prices come primarily through lowering rates of return. So ironically those who say that QE helps the rich also say it hurts savers—and there's a substantial overlap between those groups."

Has Europe treated Greece too harshly? "In a narrow sense, what Europe has done is to allow Greece the option of staying in the eurozone and remaining current on its debts. Greece ultimately decided that it would prefer to stay in the eurozone and to continue to service its debts. So in that respect Europe gave Greece the option and Greece did what it felt was best. In a broader sense, though, the eurozone has not provided Greece with the broad prosperity that would have helped it escape from its problems more quickly."

Britain played an important role during the financial crisis, notably during the attempt to find a buyer for troubled investment bank Lehman Brothers. Barclays wanted to buy Lehman but the Financial Services Authority (FSA) refused to ratify the acquisition. Does some blame for Lehman's collapse lie with Britain? "In a narrow sense, yes," replied Bernanke, "because Barclays had expressed an interest in buying Lehman and the British authorities essentially nixed the acquisition. At the time it was a crushing blow because we felt that was our last chance, and we were told no."

"However, there are a couple of qualifications in retrospect. The first was, as Alistair Darling wrote in his book, the British were really unwilling to have Lehman's bad assets essentially on a British balance sheet—which was at least understandable." He added that the Lehman collapse prompted necessary reforms. "Congress was not going to act until some company failed and the panic got sufficiently bad. At the time we were trying desperately to save the company."

Bernanke had warm words for Britain's swift response to the Northern Rock crisis. For this he credits Britain's parliamentary system. "Britain responded more effectively and quickly in the fall of 2008 than the US did because the government was able to work together, and find an acceptable solution over a weekend. While in the US, it was a long contentious debate." How will Gor-

don Brown be judged by history? "From my perspective Brown was very effective. The British were the first to implement a comprehensive response to the fragility of the banking system."

The economic downturn has seen the rise of populist movements. Was Bernanke worried by such populism? "I am, yes. It was a predictable outcome. Populists have always been distrustful of central banks, particularly in the US. Various populist movements prevented the creation of the central bank in the US until 1913. But while the recession no doubt helped to trigger some of the recent upsurge in populist feelings, they also originate in the longer-term trend towards inequality, frustrations about globalisation and technological change as well as changes in communications media like the internet. And it is not just an American phenomenon."

## **"The British were the first to implement a comprehensive response to the fragility of the banking system"**

Did that cause problems in implementing policy? "In the US, which has a political system which is very status quo orientated and requires substantial cooperation and consensus to move, the polarisation of politics has made it very difficult for the government to take actions that would be constructive in terms of addressing some of the problems that the populists themselves point to."

Have regulations been strengthened enough? "I think there's been a great deal of progress. There is considerably better oversight in the US. Before the crisis the financial regulatory system had been highly fragmented and full of gaps. They have been mostly closed. There are tools in place for continued development of oversight and for the system to adjust to changes as they occur over time. Very importantly, the underlying philosophy of oversight has switched from what we call micro-prudential, which is institution-oriented oversight, to macro-prudential, which means that at least part of the effort of regulators has to be looking at the system as a whole and the systemic risks that might cause problems in the system overall."


How is the recovery going in the US? "Since 2009 the Fed and other forecasters have consistently been too optimistic about the pace of economic growth. But at the same time the Fed and other economic forecasters have been too pessimistic about the rate at which unemployment will fall. In some respects the economy has moved back to its potential, as measured by the level of unemployment, at a moderately rapid pace. The disappointing aspect is that the potential itself is not as strong as we would like. In

the US, productivity growth since the recession has been very disappointing, well below post-war norms. It's not clear how much the crisis contributed to that. But some research also suggests that the slowdown in productivity began before the crisis. In the US, the turning point according to some recent research, was 2005, just before the crisis."

What about Larry Summers's contention that the US economy is in the grip of secular stagnation. "Secular stagnation is not the same thing as slow long-term growth. There's a point of view associated with Robert Gordon [who spoke to *Prospect* last year], which is that because of slowing population growth, lack of revolutionary technological change and other factors, our long-term growth prospects in the US, the UK and Europe are at best moderate. That could be the case."

"The secular stagnation thesis is more extreme. It argues that the rate of return on fiscal capital is so low that even at zero nominal interest rates or negative real interest rates there won't be enough demand to bring the economy up to its potential. The Gordon thesis is that the potential itself will grow only slowly over the next few decades; the secular stagnation thesis is that the rate of return on capital is so low we can't even reach that potential because zero interest rates won't be enough."

"I'm not without sympathy with this. Nevertheless, I don't think the evidence suggests, at least in the US, that full employment is out of reach. We're almost at full employment. But the basic idea that the return to capital appears quite low around the world, at least for now, seems hard to deny given that real interest rates in all advanced economies are exceptionally low."

The Queen famously asked a group of economists in 2009 why they hadn't seen the crisis coming. What would he have replied? "I would have said that the reason the crisis was so severe was because sub-prime mortgages and similar problems triggered a broad-based financial panic. Financial panics are not a new thing. They have been around for hundreds of years. The mistake was that neither economists nor regulators nor leaders of major financial firms fully appreciated that the system in the advanced industrial economies was still vulnerable to such a panic. I don't think it was primarily a failure of economic theory, it was really a failure to recognise that there were important vulnerabilities in the structure of our financial system which, when the triggers occurred, were transmitted into a panic." 

Ben Bernanke's *The Courage to Act* (Norton) is reviewed by Mervyn King on p71

For the full transcript of this interview conducted by Bronwen Maddox, Jonathan Derbyshire and Sameer Rahim, visit [www.prospectmagazine.co.uk](http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk)

# The Duel

## Should the government rethink its policy on tax credits?



**YES**

Kate Andrews

**NO**

Ken Clarke

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**The Tax Credit system, where employees on low pay can reclaim some tax, was introduced by Gordon Brown in 1999. The government plans to phase it out by 2017, replacing it with Universal Credit. Those plans were halted in October by a House of Lords vote urging further study of the consequences.**

**YES**

It's easy to understand why people might be conflicted about tax credits. On the one hand, tax credits are a direct handout from the state, often given to those only working part-time. On the other, they incentivise work and benefit those at the bottom on relatively low pay.

Combine this internal conflict with the UK's welfare structure as a whole, and it would seem necessary for the government to implement some kind of reform to the various systems, tax credits included.

But the Chancellor is only interested in cuts, not reform.

And those proposed tax credit cuts will hit hard-working people the most. The truth is that in 2015, not all jobs can provide a livable income, and tax credits are one of the most efficient ways the UK currently has of supplementing people's incomes. Rather than jeopardising jobs altogether, which the national living wage threatens to do, tax

credits encourage those at the bottom to contribute to their own livelihoods.

Of course, tax credits are not the ideal form of welfare, and if the Chancellor were serious about tackling the deficit, he might consider implementing more radical welfare reforms that cut spending further, but not at the expense of low earners.

For example, a new Adam Smith Institute paper, "Free Market Welfare: The case for a Negative Income Tax," shows how merging most means-tested benefits—including tax credits—into one single, individualised payment could save £6bn a year in administrative costs (compared to the £4.5bn saved from cutting tax credits outright).

The Institute for Fiscal Studies has estimated that millions of homes will lose an average of £1,000 per year as a result of the changes. For most families, that top-up is not pocket change; it's a damaging loss of needed funds and it hits their incentive to work. If the Chancellor is allowed to go through with the proposed tax credit cuts, he will need to explain what reforms, if any, will be implemented to help keep the lights on.

**NO**

As we have to reform the welfare state in present circumstances, and the government has a mandate to do so, the obvious action is to cut back on tax credits. It was

never good policy to introduce a system whereby the government topped-up the pay of millions of people. Many of those who receive it are grateful, although I doubt whether they were induced to vote for the Labour government as a result. The benefit is of course shared indirectly with their employers, who have been able to keep wages low, with less incentive to invest in productivity, for many years as a result.

The Chancellor is trying to move back to a system whereby employers pay wages and salaries and the government has redistributive tax systems and offers legitimate welfare payments to those with a claim because of their vulnerability and circumstances. This was bound to be unpopular. A party political majority in the House of Lords has responded to this unpopularity with suggestions that unspecified "tweaks" might make it acceptable.

You do at least propose moving to a negative income tax as an alternative. People have tried to design such a system for the last 30 years and I doubt whether the Treasury and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) could rapidly produce such a system at the moment, however worthy the intention.

There will never be a better time to make the reductions in tax credits that George

Osborne is proposing. A newly elected government has a mandate for £12bn of welfare savings. The labour market is stronger than it has been for years with real wages rising and many employers able to move away from a very low pay structure dependent on government subsidy. If we don't get on with it now, the opportunity may not recur for years.

**YES** The government does have a mandate to reform welfare—and it should do so—but there is nothing obvious about cutting one of the few benefits that incentivises work. I'll come back to this point, but let me first debunk this theory that tax credits are a subsidy for employers.

The theory goes that tax credits allow employers to keep wages down, when they could (and should) be paying their employees a salary that amounts to a comfortable wage. But this is simply not the case. In the UK's competitive labour market, employees are paid according to their productivity (not according to the standards set by living wage campaigners) and they accept salaries around what they believe their productivity to be worth. It's not that an employer won't pay a security guard or cleaner above their productivity cost—they cannot, without poorly impacting their business.

Trying to force employers to comply to set wage levels rather than competitive market wages is one of the reasons the Office for Budget Responsibility estimates over 60,000 jobs will be lost when the new mandatory national living wage comes into play next April. This will set minimum pay at £7.20 per hour for all workers over 25.

We both want to achieve a smaller, more efficiently run welfare state. But until the Chancellor is willing to invest time and effort in real reform, tax credits are one of the best welfare systems we have. They work as a direct cash transfer to low-paid workers, who are looking at low-pay or no job until they become more skilled. They directly help tackle in-work poverty, while still delivering an incentive to work.

You are probably right that there is no better time, politically, to make cuts to tax credits. But if the Chancellor is so determined to cut spending, why is he insistent on protecting the triple-lock on pensions, where the state pension increases by the higher of inflation, average earnings or 2.5 per cent?

The Chancellor cannot have it both ways. If he cuts one of the best benefits, he needs to explain why continues to protect the worst.

**NO** The debate about tax credits cannot be reduced to arguments about whether it incentivises people to work or incentivises employers to keep pay low. There may be an element of both, but it also has the effect of making part-time workers reluctant

to increase their hours or people to move to better paid jobs, because of the reduction of their tax credit payments when they do.

Under the tax credit system, an employer pays an employee and then the government adds further pay on top of earnings to three million people. When a government puts tax credits up it buys votes, or so Gordon Brown believed. When tax credits are reduced, it is unpopular, as Osborne has discovered. Basically, it was a senseless invention in the welfare system and remains an obvious target for reform.

The vast majority of welfare benefits are paid to people in work or to pensioners. There is no easy alternative, politically, to the cut in tax credits that the government is making. I am rather vulnerable to your argument, because I am not an enthusiast for the national living wage. I hope that it does not cost more than 60,000 jobs and I am worried about slipping into a debate where political parties try to outbid each other on the level of the minimum wage. As someone who argued for Margaret Thatcher's change to the then unaffordable annual up-rating of state pensions, I also agree that it is unfortunate that the state pension is now rising rapidly in real terms and compares favourably with almost any other income. These arguments, however, are an attempt to divert from the merits or demerits of tax credits. Any attempt to go back on the triple lock would no doubt be defeated by the Labour and Lib Dem majority in the House of Lords.

As a liberal country we need a welfare state that efficiently protects the poor, the vulnerable and the low paid. Many low paid people will continue to need housing benefit, free childcare, free school meals and so on. I believe that a populist subsidy added to the pay of millions of people is an obvious target if we are moving to a more rational and affordable system.

**YES** I agree with you that in a liberal society, we want to ensure the vulnerable and poor are protected. But there is another question to ask: should welfare recipients see their freedoms inhibited by benefits?

I pose this question to combat your last assertion, that "many low paid people will continue to need housing benefit, free childcare, free school meals and so on." Not only does this kind of complicated welfare system—that requires lots of employees to dish out different kinds of benefits—breed inefficiency, but it also gives poor people less autonomy. It restricts everything, from where they can live to what their kids eat.

The benefit of tax credits is that they provide people with the ambition and drive to take charge of their lives and their day-to-day habits as well. A better welfare system is one that tops up pay and lets workers spend it in the marketplace as they please, rather than one that keeps their pay down, and lets the

state play "provider."

My mention of the national living wage and pension pots is not meant to be a distraction from the topic at hand—these examples show that this government has its priorities backwards. Regardless of their intentions, they have threatened low-skilled jobs and protected their voting constituency.

The welfare system should not be a political giveaway for anyone. Ideally, it should operate efficiently, at low cost to the taxpayer, and provide a safety net for those at the bottom.

But hacking away at tax credits—without considering something like a negative income tax to replace the lost income—is bad policy; and it's going to hurt those who don't have the resources to cushion the blow.

**NO** I am surprised that you take such an extreme libertarian view. I see the attraction in saying that the state should provide an additional wage to all those on modest incomes, leaving them free to spend it as they wish. In practice this leaves people at the mercy of events and their creditors. Free childcare, means-tested free school meals and so on do have the advantage of protecting essential purchases in financial crises. A targeted welfare state is the only affordable option for a country with a healthy economy.

You have never tried to defend the full extent of tax credits when families earning over £60,000 a year received it. It is still too expensive for the government to finance by tax revenue. It is assumed that the government will continue to borrow the necessary billions until the next financial crisis comes.

Whenever tax credits are reduced or tweaked, government is going to face unpopularity. The only time for change comes when the labour market is strong, employment is high and average earnings are rising.

Ironically, you and I agree in principle. I would love to see someone devise a negative income tax to end paying tax out of one pocket and receiving benefit in the other.

I agree that "Ideally, the welfare system should operate efficiently at low cost to the tax payer and provide a safety net for those at the bottom." Perhaps that sentence ought to determine future policy. **P**

*Kate Andrews is Head of Communications and a research associate at the Adam Smith Institute*

*Ken Clarke is Conservative MP for Rushcliffe and former Chancellor of the Exchequer*

**P** Should the government rethink its policy on tax credits? Vote now at [www.prospectmagazine.co.uk](http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk)  
Last month we asked *Prospect* readers: "Is our definition of 'refugee' too wide?" They answered: **Yes 39% No 61%**

A large, stylized graphic of a world map composed of white line art icons on a dark blue background. The icons represent various aspects of life, including urban development, industry, agriculture, and nature. The map is oriented with North to the left.

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# Features

The battle of our time	Charles Goodhart, Manoj Pradhan and Pratyancha Pardeshi 28
Brexit: an ugly divorce	Anatole Kaletsky, Peter Kellner 36
Who is David Cameron?	Philip Collins 42
Can women have it all?	Cathy Newman 48
Aid: compassion is not enough	Paul Collier 54
Is the House of Saud about to fall?	William Patey 58
His master's voice: a speechwriter tells all	Barton Swaim 62

## The battle of our time

The ageing of our society will reverse the trends of 30 years. Wages will rise, but working people will be locked in political combat with pensioners

CHARLES GOODHART, MANOJ PRADHAN AND PRATYANCHA PARDESHI

**D**emographics, the study of the changing structure of populations, is widely acknowledged to be critically important. But demographic changes occur so slowly that almost no one considers their impact on markets, the economy and society, except as something that will happen some day in the distant future.

Four key, long-running trends in the world economy have continued for more than three decades, and each of them is rooted in demography. Earnings have been slowing, in some cases even falling, in the advanced economies, with very little explanation as to why. Membership of trade unions in the private sector has been falling sharply. Inequality, within countries, though not between them, has risen, with Thomas Piketty, the French economist, famously ascribing this to a tendency for the rate of return to capital to exceed growth. Interest rates have been falling for the last 35 years and this has often been attributed to a decline in investment relative to savings.

All four trends were caused largely by a demographic “sweet spot” that developed some time around 1970 (sweet from the perspective of global growth, if not from that of workers). This was caused, in turn, by a marked decline in birth rates, especially but not only in advanced countries. As large numbers of young people entered the working population, the ratio of workers to dependents increased sharply (see charts 1 and 2 on p31). There was a sharp increase in the working age population since 1970 and then a doubling, and more, of the size of the global labour force thanks to the entry into the global economy of China and countries in eastern Europe from 1990 onwards.

A combination of these effects lowered incomes and labour productivity, relative to capital and management, and so raised inequality and reduced the incentive to invest in the advanced

economies. The effect was to lessen the bargaining power and wages of workers, as businessmen could credibly threaten their employees with relocation of their operations to China or the Czech Republic. The resulting switch of such operations to cheaper offshore locations dampened inflation. This, together with the fall in the ratio of dependents to workers, drove up supply relative to demand. This in turn forced central banks to ease interest rates, thereby driving up asset prices and causing a further ratcheting-up of inequality.

Now, things are about to go into reverse. Global population growth has fallen to around 1.25 per cent. According to the United Nations, it will decline further to about 0.75 per cent per annum by 2040. Population growth in advanced economies has fallen from over 1 per cent per annum in the 1950s to below 0.5 per cent now, and may fall to near zero by 2040.

The demographic “sweet spot” will now disappear quite fast. In particular, the ratios of workers to the elderly will worsen rapidly. We are at the point of inflection, and the rate of decline is predicted to steepen in both advanced and developing economies, especially China and Germany. The result is that the total working age population in the world, having grown rapidly between 1970 and 2005, will now grow much less quickly. In advanced economies and north Asia, it will go into outright decline, while at the same time the ratio of workers to the elderly is already getting worse.

As populations age, demand for medical services will grow. We should also be concerned about the impact of age-related medical conditions on the ability of people to work. Age-related illnesses such as dementia will require more patient care and will most likely tie up an increasing share of the labour force. Unlike the illnesses we worry about most today, age-related illnesses do not diminish patient lifespans significantly. In advanced economies where labour is relatively expensive, a shift towards further labour-intensive patient care would add to labour supply and wage pressures.

Just as the expansion in the global labour force pushed wages down—once inflation is taken into account—and inequality up ►

*Charles Goodhart is a senior consultant at Morgan Stanley, where Manoj Pradhan and Pratyancha Pardeshi are economists*





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**“The consequences of demographic change will be profound... wages will rise and inequality will fall”**

in the advanced economies, a smaller labour force will inevitably lead to rising wages, a larger share of income for labour and a decline in inequality (relative to total population). These demographic changes will be particularly marked in China (see chart 3). It remains to be seen whether the Chinese government's decision to reform the one child policy will have any significant effect on this.

As Piketty and also Anthony Atkinson have reminded us, inequality within most countries has risen in recent decades. At the same time, it has fallen between countries, as Asian economies have caught up with Europe.

The demographic "sweet spot" raised inequality in at least three ways. First, the positive labour supply shock lowered wages and productivity in the advanced economies. The return to labour fell relative to the return to capital, a trend made worse by the accompanying fall in interest rates. While this created greater inequality within economies, it led to greater equality between countries as productivity and wages in China and eastern Europe rose relative to Japan and the west.

Second, the relocation of labour-intensive production led to deflationary pressure, monetary expansion, higher asset prices and so higher inequality. Employers in advanced economies relocated production to China or eastern Europe. Along with the downward pressure on prices of manufactured goods, this led to deflationary pressures, on both domestic demand and inflation in advanced economies. This led to monetary policy becoming more expansionary, with both nominal and real interest rates trending downwards since the early 1980s. Lower interest rates raised asset prices.

Third, the relocation of production helped to raise the savings rate in China and raised the returns to capital. Providing the capital (and the management) to make these additional workers productive was easier than might have been expected.

## “Demographic changes will unwind three multi-decade trends that many today take for granted”

The dependency ratio in China (and eastern Europe) was also falling fast between 1975 and 2010. With fewer children to support them later in their old age, and faced with an inadequate social safety net, the growing population of China (and eastern Europe) saved voraciously, leading to massive export surpluses, a savings glut and other imbalances. In addition, governance issues encouraged excessive corporate saving in some countries (China and Japan, for example) and insufficient investment in others (for example, the United States and the UK).

Demographic trends were, therefore, one of the main causes of rising inequality within countries over recent decades. This had nothing to do with what Piketty has wrongly described as the innate tendency for returns to capital to exceed growth ( $r > g$ , as his famous formula has it). The reversal of these demographic trends will mean that the inequality is likely to reverse in the future, too. Rising wages will ensure a larger share of national output for labour and falling inequality within economies.

There is also likely to be a clear dividing line between advanced economies with adverse demographics that will face slower growth and those whose growth will continue to rise

(India, Indonesia and some countries in Africa). In addition to their demographic advantages, developing economies can play catch-up with their advanced counterparts, though this will depend on a range of factors, including the ability of administrators and the quality of policymaking.

Whereas, in the past, the improvement in the dependency ratio was caused by falling birth rates, the worsening of that measure in the future will be caused by a massive rise in the numbers of old people (that is, over-65s). How we treat the swelling ranks of the old will be perhaps the most crucial social policy challenge in the coming years. Among the key issues will be medicine (can we overcome dementia, which is a growing threat?), housing (can we provide more custom-built housing for the old and persuade them to move into it?) and state pensions (what do we do with the destitute old who have failed to provide adequately for an extended old age?).

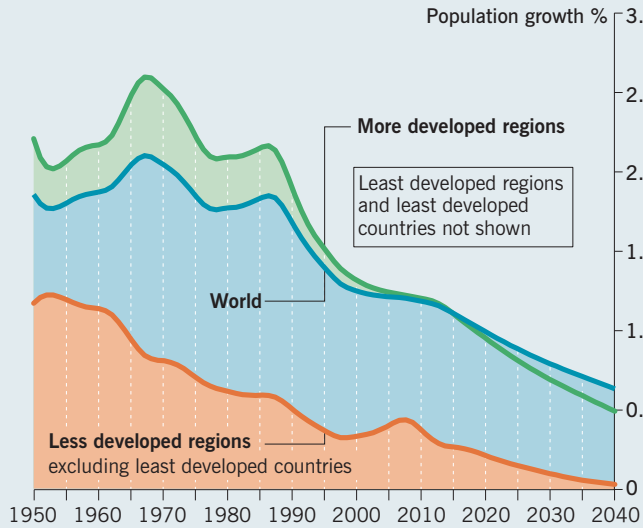
**T**he consequences of these demographic changes will be profound. They will unwind the three multi-decade trends in the global economy that many today take for granted. First, inflation will rise, reversing the trend that we have witnessed for decades now. The ratio of the old to those of working age, and the overall dependency ratio, is about to get much worse. If the advanced economies continue with their present policies of relatively generous provision of pensions and healthcare to the old, so that consumption rises with age, then the tax burden on workers must rise, which will add to inflationary pressure. The two key cohorts of the population (see chart 4)—the prime working age population and the elderly—will become locked in a political battle. As the ranks of the elderly swell, their political clout will increase. The prime working age population will not be able to assert its influence through numbers in the same way. What they will have on their side, however, is a declining supply of a commodity—labour—whose price is likely to be on an upward trend. Workers may try to compensate for the loss of political power to the elderly by seeking higher wages.

Second, demographics will raise the interest rate level that is consistent with full employment and stable inflation in the global economy, reversing a three-decade-long decline. Known as the “equilibrium real interest rate,” this is likely to rise because savings will fall more than investment due to demographic headwinds. There are four reasons for this: China’s demographics will lead to lower savings and a smaller current account surplus—this process is already under way and has further to go; inequality will fall and this means income growth is more likely to go into spending than saving; the old in advanced economies show significant inertia when it comes to housing, which means that further residential investment will have to be made in order to house the young; and higher real wages will encourage investment in order to hold down labour costs.

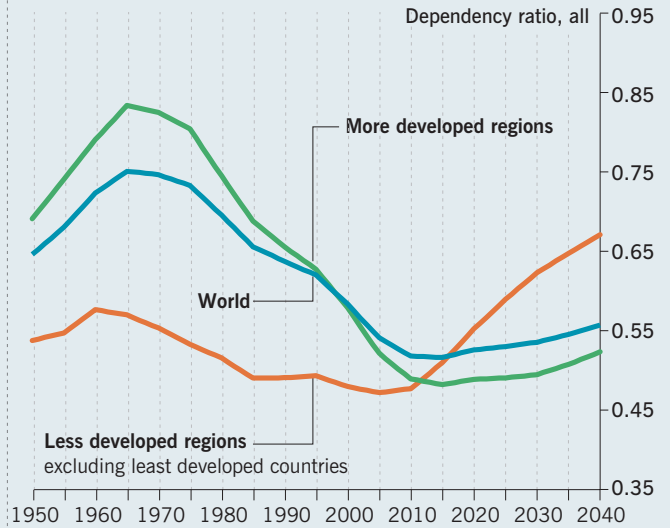
North Asia has already seen its demographics turn (Japan’s turned in the 1970s). However, north Asia and Japan are not necessarily a guide to the effects that demographics will have on other economies. Why? Japan’s demographics were turning at a time when demographic pressures were still very benign. Despite labour getting scarcer in Japan, Japanese firms were able to move production offshore in order to keep wages down. This led to employment moving from manufacturing to services and an excess supply of labour kept wage growth controlled.

Demographics elsewhere in north Asia are now turning, but ►

### 1. Population growth: high in the past, slowing now

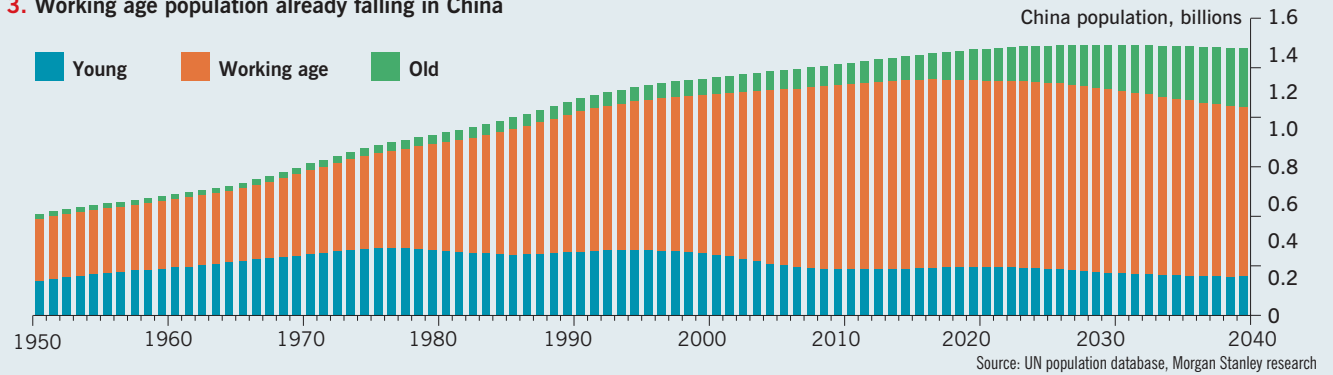


### 2. Ratio of dependents (under 15 and over 64) to workers



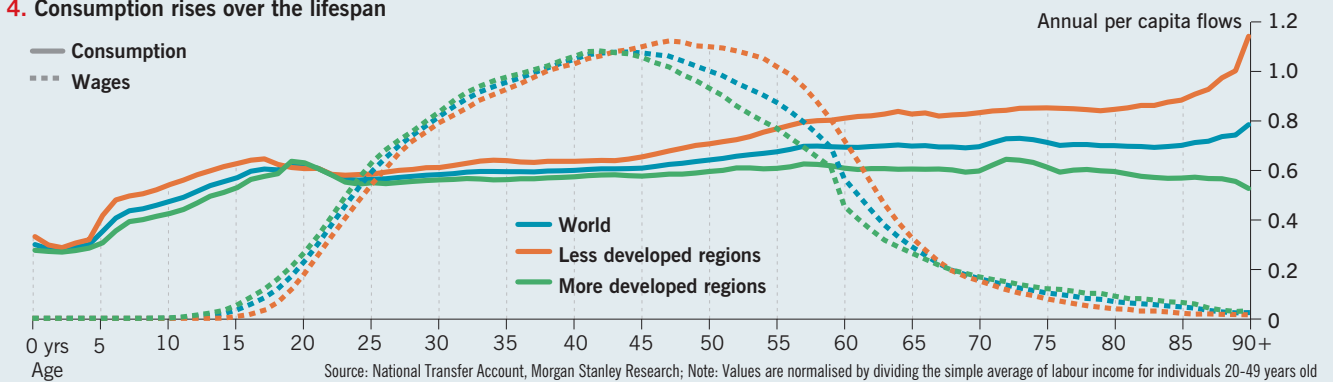
Source: UN population database, Morgan Stanley research

### 3. Working age population already falling in China



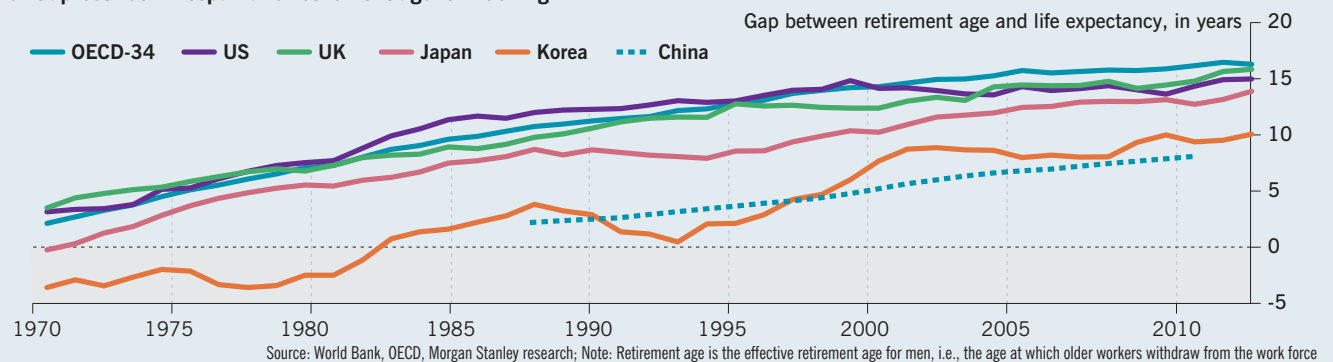
Source: UN population database, Morgan Stanley research

### 4. Consumption rises over the lifespan



Source: National Transfer Account, Morgan Stanley Research; Note: Values are normalised by dividing the simple average of labour income for individuals 20-49 years old

### 5. Gap between lifespan and retirement age is widening



Source: World Bank, OECD, Morgan Stanley research; Note: Retirement age is the effective retirement age for men, i.e., the age at which older workers withdraw from the work force

## Don't forget the politics

Bronwen Maddox



Demographics are not destiny, but they matter. The global economy has been reshaped in the last three decades by huge shifts in the size and age of the world's population, and in how people work and live. The authors of this piece, Charles Goodhart, Manoj Pradhan and Pratyancha Pardeshi, are right to argue that these shifts have dramatic economic effects which are too easily overlooked by economists, never mind politicians.

They show how the entry of the baby boomers into the workforce after 1970, followed by the absorption of millions of Chinese and eastern European workers into the global economy 20 years later, caused wages and interest rates to fall and asset prices and inequality to

rise. Thomas Piketty, they argue, was right about rising inequality over the past three decades—but for the wrong reasons. It rose, they say, not because of some innate tendency for the returns to capital to exceed growth, but because the cost of labour fell as the numbers of workers swelled. And if, as data suggest, the size of the global labour force is now shrinking, then trends that many thought were here to stay may be about to unwind.

Well, maybe. They are entirely right that in all the heated arguments about inequality and wages, it is foolish—and common—to omit as powerful a factor as big shifts in the size of the global workforce. But theirs is a deliberately broad-based projection. It arguably understates the impact of immi-

gration, which, locally, can have dramatic effects on wages. It may also prove to understate the changes that people are beginning to make to extend their working lives, as lifespans rise and pension and health provision is squeezed. The authors are silent, too, on the impact that technological progress has had on the nature of work, squeezing out unskilled jobs and placing a premium on high-skilled ones. Aside from a glancing reference to declining rates of trade union membership, the authors have very little to say about the role that non-demographic factors have played. They largely leave out the politics—and the response that governments and individual people will make in turn as these forces take hold.

All the same, the political conclusion they do offer could not be better aimed. The growing conflict between those in work and those who are retired is the battle of our time.

the starting point is severe over-investment and over-indebtedness. During the period when excessive investment is being reduced, growth will be weak, the returns accruing to capital compared to labour could easily fall even though labour supply is shrinking and deflationary pressures could persist because of excess capacity. These effects may get attributed to demographics, although they are not necessarily related to them.

The third long-term trend about to go into reverse is rising inequality. As wages and the share of labour in national income rises, and rising interest rates keep asset prices under control, workers and those who derive their incomes from economic rather than financial activity will do better, relatively speaking. The result, if these dynamics do occur, will be a fall in inequality.

Is this script written in stone? Are there factors that could offset the demographic headwinds that we are about to face? Consider three possibilities. First, participation of the over-65s in the labour markets of advanced economies has been rising from the lows reached nearly 20 years ago, but it varies quite a bit from country to country. Moreover, the “obvious” ways to increase the incentive to work for longer—raising the retirement age, lowering pension benefits and reducing healthcare benefits—are all politically controversial. Even if the political will to implement such changes were strong, participation of over-65s would be unlikely to change overnight. We would begin to see the effects only after the demographic headwinds had started to take a serious toll on the economy.

It has become easier to work beyond the age of 65. Life expectancy and health-consciousness have both increased significantly. But the difference between life expectancy and the retirement age has widened consistently over the past 40-45 years. In advanced economies, the difference between life expectancy and retirement age has increased in a straight line; in developing economies, too, this difference has increased,

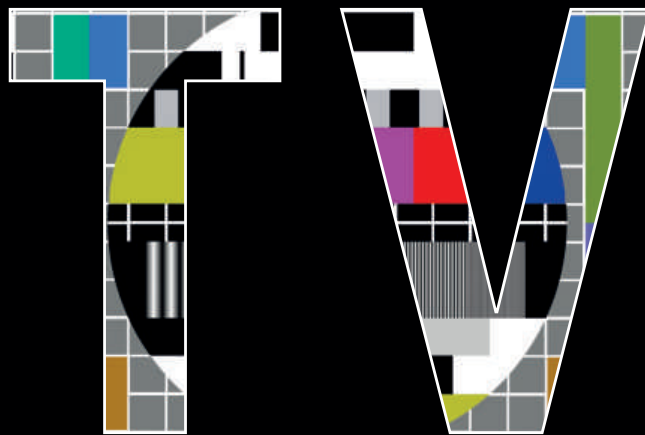
although from a much lower starting point in many instances (see chart 5). The irony, of course, is that it is advanced economies that will probably find it more difficult politically to persuade citizens to work beyond the current retirement age.

There is also still a modest gap, globally, between male and female participation in the labour force. In India, which could potentially be a source of young labour to the developed world, the gap has actually increased in recent years and is now double that of any of its peers. Reducing this gap will not be easy as it is the consequence of deep-seated social issues such as the lack of child security, social care and insurance. But doing so could be important in order to mitigate the effects of demographic headwinds.

**G**reater labour force participation will depend on education and training for jobs that require verbal skills and experience. A more educated labour force is likely to be able to remain in work for longer. Advanced economies might have to change to provide and then to exploit a greater supply of educated labour. It is education that separates those willing to participate in the labour force beyond retirement age from those able to do so. The evidence bears this out, with labour-force participation by over-55s being higher among those with bachelor or graduate degrees. For the moment, however, involvement remains too low.

A second possibility would be to capitalise on those economies benefiting from demographic tailwinds (Africa and India, in particular). In theory, this looks plausible. But in practice, net immigration into advanced economies has, at least until recently, been pitifully small compared to the size of the labour force, and the political will to change immigration laws dramatically is lacking. Could capital flow to these countries instead of labour flowing to the developed world? Yes, but the bureaucracy, human capital and infrastructure in these economies probably ►

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Workers on the production line at a Honda plant in Ozu. Japan has already undergone changes that are now happening elsewhere

won't be able to absorb large capital inflows efficiently for quite a few years yet.

Migration is unlikely to help if current trends continue. Net migration flows into advanced economies and out of developing economies peaked in 2007 at about 24m each. When adjusted for the size of the population, however, these flows are far too small to make a difference. For all the fuss about immigration, there is simply too little of it to show any significant global economic impact at all on the kind of demographic changes we are discussing here. Much more would be needed, but this is a politically charged issue.

Why not export capital instead to economies with growing populations, produce there and import finished goods from there? Some of this will happen naturally, but exporting capital to economies where the labour force is growing is not easy. There

**“The future will have its own difficulties, but they will not be the same as those in the past. Piketty is history”**

won't be another “China” for a long time, if ever. Certainly, given where developing economies are starting from, rapid growth is likely, but the likelihood that any of them will be able to transform itself into the next China is small. With overall growth in developing economies slowing, India, Africa and Latin America will provide a buffer against the global demographic headwinds, but will not be able to mitigate them fully.

Perhaps the economy best suited to marrying its generous demographics to an extensive inflow of capital is India. However, such a change is unlikely to occur over the next few years, and could only happen over the next decade with the help of significant tailwinds behind both the domestic and global economy.

This is because India's economy is starting from an extremely low level of sophistication. This should allow rapid development, but it is presently in no shape to absorb a large flow of capital and put it to work in a short period of time. If India is to beat the odds and transform itself into a manufacturing powerhouse, global demand will have to become much more supportive.

A major factor in keeping India and Africa from becoming economic powerhouses is the lack of an administrative infrastructure. Such infrastructure is critical to help deploy domestic or imported capital and to take advantage of the growing supply of labour.

Could fertility rise again as incomes increase? It could, but there has been little previous evidence that fertility has responded to higher income and wealth even in the advanced economies.

Those who predict the future on the basis of current problems—such as deflationary pressures, ever-rising inequality and stagnant growth—have not taken into account the ongoing dramatic reversal of demographic trends. There were huge increases in the available workforce from 1970 until now, but in the future the workforce will decline by a few million each year, while the number of old people will explode. The future will have its own difficulties, but they will not be the same as those in the past. Piketty is history. **■**



“Outrageous that Lowry only used size zero models!”

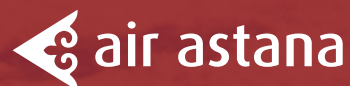
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# An ugly divorce

Leaving Europe could be Britain's biggest diplomatic disaster since losing America

ANATOLE KALETSKY

Ask any divorced couple whether their relationship would have been different had they never married. Actually, don't bother asking, since the answer is obvious. Strangely, most Conservative politicians do not seem to understand this—and neither do 48 per cent of British voters. That is the number, according to recent opinion polls, who want a divorce from the European Union. Many of these voters seem to consider British exit (or Brexit) a cost-free option that would produce a new relationship similar to, but better than, the EU's deals with Switzerland and Norway, the only significant countries in western Europe that have never joined the EU.

To be fair, not all of the politicians and ordinary voters who want Brexit are naive enough to think that it would carry no economic costs. Some anti-European zealots find the EU marriage so oppressive that they would accept big economic sacrifices to escape from what they see as marital abuse. But such absolutist Europhobes, for whom lower living standards and large-scale job losses seem a price worth paying for liberation from Brussels, are very rare. Europe is identified as the top issue facing Britain by just 1 per cent of voters and among the most important by 8 per cent according to recent Ipsos MORI polling. This suggests that, if faced with serious economic costs, there would not be remotely enough unconditional nationalists to win a referendum—or even to dominate a Tory conference, once it was recognised that Brexit would precipitate a second Scottish referendum, and therefore the destruction of the very United Kingdom for which voters were being asked to jeopardise their economic well being.

No, Brexit will happen only if most British voters firmly believe that leaving the EU can do no harm to the economy. Yet this belief is wishful thinking—not because the EU is such a wonderful organisation, but because there is a world of difference between politely declining a marriage proposal, as Norway and Switzerland have done repeatedly since the 1970s, and acrimoniously breaking up a prosperous, if difficult, relationship that has lasted for 40 years.

The idea that Britain outside the EU could turn into a Switzerland or Norway is the big lie of the Brexit debate. The comparison, which is made repeatedly by the Brexit lobby, is false in many ways: because of Norway's oil wealth and Switzerland's bank secrecy, although these are depreciating assets; because these countries have small cohesive populations, relatively unburdened by a poorly educated underclass; and because their economies are dominated by domestically-owned busi-

nesses, rather than American and Asian companies using Britain as a bridgehead into Europe. But the key difference between these countries and Britain is that they never joined the EU in the first place.

The special deals they now enjoy for access to EU markets and institutions, ranging from passport queues at airports to subsidies for academic research, were always negotiated in a calm and cooperative spirit, with both sides expecting tangible economic benefits compared with the status quo ante, but with the EU always recognised as the senior partner and driving force. In this spirit, Norway and Switzerland have accepted wide-ranging obligations to abide by EU laws over which their citizens and parliaments have no influence, as the price for access to European markets—complete for Norway, but limited in the case of Switzerland to products and services defined in over 100 bilateral treaties.

Could Britain hope for a better deal post-Brexit? That was how Eurosceptics unanimously responded to David Cameron's warnings against the "Norway option" in his first-ever serious comments about the economic consequences of Brexit, at October's Scandinavian summit in Iceland. But why on earth should Britain

**“The EU will want to punish Britain, so that Brexit does not start a chain reaction of other departures”**

expect better treatment than other non-member countries, if it chooses to leave the EU? Instead of a friendly, businesslike negotiation, expected to produce economic benefits for both sides, Brexit would start a highly politicised negative-sum game. The purpose would be to share out the losses from unravelling shared institutions deeply embedded for 40 years in the lives of both Britain and Europe—much more like a court-ordered divorce settlement, than a cooperative and mutually beneficial business deal.

Brexit, if it happens, will be viewed as a hostile act by every other EU government. Even Britain's former allies outside the eurozone, such as Sweden and Poland, will feel indignantly betrayed, as Britain's departure will tilt the EU balance of power overwhelmingly in favour of Germany and France and towards the full-scale federalist integration spear-headed by the euro project.

To make matters worse, the EU will want to punish Britain, so that the Brexit precedent does not start a chain reaction of other departures and renegotiation demands. For this reason, the rise of populist nationalism and the EU's present unpopularity across the whole of Europe will make it much tougher, not easier, for Britain to negotiate a favourable post-





**“Brexit, if it happens, will be viewed as a hostile act by every other EU government”**

Brexit deal. To see this dynamic in action, one has only to look at the punishment meted out to Greece, *pour encourager les autres* among the Eurosceptics in Spain and Italy. Judging by this experience, Britain should expect much harsher treatment from its former partners in trying to negotiate a post-Brexit relationship than the conditions imposed on Switzerland, Norway or other countries, like Israel and Turkey, which have privileged trading relationships with the EU.

Yet the economic, and even political, case for Brexit largely depends on the assumption that Britain will continue to have access to the European single market on terms at least as generous as Norway and Switzerland. Without such market access, many of Britain's most successful business sectors—finance, law, pharmaceuticals, creative industries and higher education—would be in deep trouble. These industries all depend on the easy movement of capital, people and ideas around the world's biggest market. They would be extremely vulnerable to the loss of single-market benefits—uniform financial regulation, consistent competition policy, freedom of establishment, mutual recognition of qualifications and so on—extracted with great difficulty over decades by Margaret Thatcher and subsequent British leaders, sometimes against strong opposition.

British-based financial institutions would be the most obvious victims. Exclusion from the single market would not close down the City of London, which would continue to operate as an off-shore financial centre. But London would surely lose its role as Europe's financial hub and would thereby lose its dominance of the world's most attractive time zone, with working hours overlapping both America and Asia. Most euro-denominated financial activity would likely move to Paris or Frankfurt, while asset management and other activities subject to EU regulation would move to Luxembourg or Dublin. These shifts can be confidently predicted because gaining financial activity for their own financial centres, while simultaneously punishing Britain and its financial institutions, would be a conscious objective of the French and German governments in any post-Brexit deal.

Britain would therefore be in a very weak negotiating position on trade with the EU. But what about Britain's apparent trump card as the EU's second-biggest trading partner (after the US)? This frequently touted “ace in the hole” is actually a busted flush. The manufacturing industries in which countries such as Germany, Italy and to some extent France, specialise are operating under worldwide trade rules that would generally guarantee EU businesses their present rights in British markets even after Brexit. Thus German or French manufacturers would have nothing to fear from the minimal restrictions on cars, machine tools and so on that Britain might threaten to impose in the absence of a free-trade agreement similar to those currently enjoyed by Norway and Switzerland. On the other hand, Britain's service industries could be severely damaged by non-tariff barriers erected outside the EU single market.

This is why the blithe assurance that Britain would negotiate a single-market deal at least as favourable as Switzerland or Norway is essential to the economic case for Brexit. It is even more essential to the political case.

Other EU governments would certainly insist, in any post-Brexit talks, on the same degree of harmonisation and control from Brussels over domestic regulation and law-making as the EU now commands in its deals with Switzerland and Norway. Among these conditions are four, all of which would negate the supposed political liberation implied by Brexit: Norway and Switzerland must abide by all single market standards and regulations, without having any say in setting them. They must translate reams of EU laws into their domestic legislation, whether their voters like them or not. They must contribute substantially more to the EU budget than they receive in various benefits and grants. And, most controversially in the British context, they must accept unlimited EU immigration—and both countries have a higher share of EU immigrants in their population than the UK.

Would such encroachment on national sovereignty be ►

acceptable to Britain in the first flush of post-Brexit nationalist fervour? If not, then the most likely outcome would be much less access to the EU single market for Britain than currently enjoyed by Switzerland and Norway.

There would be tariff-free trade in goods, provided Britain observes all the relevant EU regulations and standards, but no access to the single market in services at all. German and French cars would still sell in Britain unimpeded, as would British-made cars sold across Europe. But British banks, insurers, lawyers, architects and online businesses could only continue to sell their services by shifting much of their activity and employment inside the EU.

When confronted with this reality, Britain would probably baulk and eventually accept the intrusive regulations required by Swiss-style EU association agreements. The ultimate result would therefore be an economic slump immediately after Brexit, followed by a renegotiation that led to less sovereignty and self-determination for Britain, or more precisely for England, since Scotland would surely split off and rejoin the EU. Within a few years, England might even be re-applying for EU membership. In short, Brexit would be the most spectacular case of self-harm in British diplomacy since George III lost America over a tax on tea.

Why then is the Brexit debate not dominated by warnings of potential disaster? The obvious explanation is that Cameron prefers not to provoke Eurosceptics, and neither do business leaders, especially while the government's strategy of modest renegotiation seems likely to succeed. But there are two deeper, more worrying, reasons for the complacency about the dangers of Brexit. The first is a misconception about democracy. Because opinion polls show roughly equal numbers on either side of the Brexit debate, the arguments are assumed to be finely-balanced—and anyone who claims otherwise is seen as disrespectful of democracy. This is absurd. As evidenced by the opinion polls already mentioned, most voters know or care little about the EU, one

way or the other. What little knowledge they have about the EU reflects the overwhelmingly Europhobic media bias detailed in Denis MacShane's revelatory book *Brexit: How Britain will leave Europe*. To the extent that voters do express strong views about Brexit, these are in part a proxy for their feelings on immigra-

**“Britain would probably baulk and accept the intrusive regulations required by Swiss-style EU agreements”**

tion, religion and even race. When discussing France it is considered obvious that anti-EU supporters of the National Front are partly motivated by racism, xenophobia and plain ignorance. Why then should this apply in Britain?

A second self-righteous misconception is that honourable politicians should not try to frighten voters and that negative campaigning never works. This is manifestly untrue. The power of negative campaigning was demonstrated in the last days of the Scottish referendum and in every Tory election victory since 1979. As for frightening voters, Thatcher and Winston Churchill never hesitated to do this when they perceived a serious threat.

With luck these misconceptions will not matter. Cameron may well succeed in presenting some modest bureaucratic concessions as a transformational New Deal and the British people will duly vote against Brexit. If, however, the Prime Minister's EU-conjuring trick looks like failing, intelligent politicians, business leaders and media commentators must stop beating about the bush and tell British voters the unpleasant truth about Brexit: the financial and legal haggling after one spouse has slammed the door is often the worst part of a divorce. **P**

# The power of uncertainty

It cannot be taken for granted that voters will keep Britain in the EU

PETER KELLNER

**L**eaving aside California and Switzerland, which delegate large numbers of political decisions to their voters, most referendums around the world concern constitutional change. And the results of most of these turn on essentially the same question: which is the safer option—to change our arrangements or to keep things as they are? Our coming referendum on the EU looks like fitting

this pattern exactly.

If it does, then the latest YouGov survey for *Prospect* suggests that the fundamentals favour a vote to stay in the EU, but that the incidentals—the possible eruption of events and campaign dramas—have a real chance of changing the outcome. And one that should give the pro-EU camp real concern is the stance that Boris Johnson finally decides to take.

For the first half of this year, YouGov found a modest but consistent lead of six to 12 points for remaining in the EU. Then came Greece's latest financial woes, followed swiftly by the refugee crisis. Since August, the two sides have been neck-and-neck.

However, when we ask a series of questions about the prospects of Britain outside the EU, a rather different picture ►



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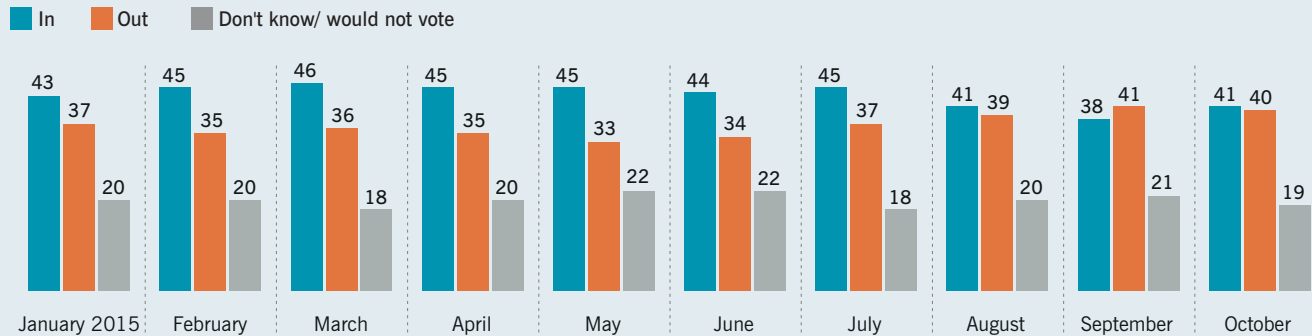


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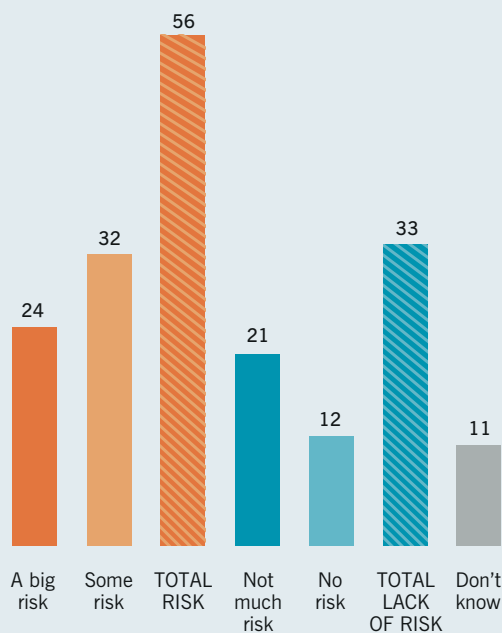
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# We're in favour of staying in, but...

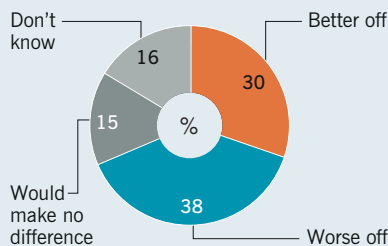
How would you vote in a referendum on the European Union? %



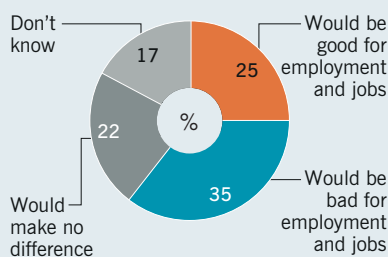
Thinking about the EU, how much of a risk, if any, do you think Britain would be taking with its future prosperity if we left the EU? %



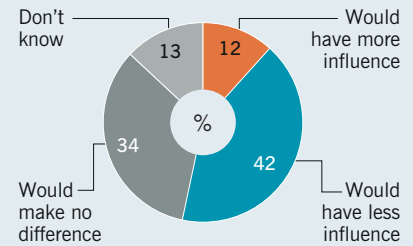
Would Britain be better or worse off economically if we left the EU, or would it make no difference?



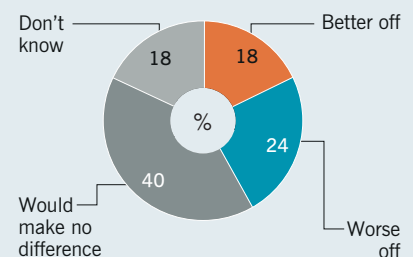
Would it be good or bad for jobs and employment if Britain left the EU, or would it make no difference?



Would Britain have more or less influence in the world if we left the EU, or would it make no difference?



Would you personally be better or worse off if we left the EU, or would it make no difference?



emerges. We tend to think that Britain would be worse off, that we would have less influence in the world and that Britain's exit from the EU would be bad for jobs and employment. Overall, 56 per cent of us think that Britain would be taking a risk with its future prosperity if we left the EU. Just 33 per cent think we would be taking "not much" or "no" risk.

How do we explain the gulf between the widespread sense of risk with the neck-and-neck figures for our basic in-out question? My belief is that we are seeing something that so often happens in referendums round the world. Months before the vote, many people express their dislike of the current state of affairs and like the general idea of change. But as decision day draws close, more

and more voters think about the alternative, and shy away. Some voters respond to a poll some months out like a one-night stand in a rocky marriage. The referendum itself poses a much tougher choice: whether to sue for divorce.

There are plenty of examples of the status quo gaining ground, especially in the final days of a referendum campaign—when Spain decided not to leave Nato in 1986, when Australia decided to keep the Queen as head of state in 1999, when Quebec voted twice to remain part of Canada, when France and Holland rejected the new EU constitution a decade ago, when support for Scottish devolution slumped at the end of the 1979 referendum—and, indeed, in the last few days of Scotland's independence cam-

paign last year. The counter examples of solid votes for change tend to come when a consensus for reform has clearly been established, and the referendum essentially legitimises that decision. Scotland's devolution referendum in 1997 is a clear example. Plainly our upcoming vote on the EU is to resolve a national division, not to ratify a consensus.

So, all else being equal, I would expect a reasonably clear vote to remain in the EU, not least because YouGov surveys have shown repeatedly that at least two million Conservatives who currently favour Brexit say they would switch sides if David Cameron, as now seems almost certain, campaigns for continued British membership.

And yet our surveys also contain clear warning signs that an "in" vote cannot be taken for granted.

First, many voters are either uncertain about the effects of Brexit or think it will make little difference. When we ask people whether they personally would be better or worse off if Britain were outside the EU, 58 per cent say either "no difference" (40 per cent) or "don't know" (18 per cent). Such figures suggest that neither side has yet established a clear lead on this issue; it could go either way.

Secondly, although 56 per cent think that Britain would be taking a risk if we left the EU, that figure is down from 64 per cent in June. The two big EU-related news stories since then—the Greek bail out drama and the refugee crisis—have plainly had a significant impact. If this trend continues, the risks of Brexit might not exert as big an influence on the referendum as seemed likely earlier this year.

Thirdly, while Cameron looks certain to campaign for an "in" vote, Boris Johnson has yet to show his hand. This month's *YouGov/Prospect* research shows that if Boris campaigns for Brexit,

this could severely weaken the Cameron effect. In one survey we asked people how they would vote if both men campaigned for Britain to stay in the EU. The effect was to lift the pro-EU majority from three points to 18—a 15-point bounce. But when we asked a separate sample how they would vote if Cameron wanted "in" and Boris wanted "out," the bounce was half as much—just eight

**“Some voters respond to a poll some months out like a one-night stand in a rocky marriage. The referendum itself poses a tougher choice: whether to sue for divorce”**

points. At this stage such numbers can be no more than indicative. But they remain telling. If Cameron and Boris both campaign for an "in" vote, Conservatives say they would vote the same way by 51 per cent to 31 per cent; but if the two men end up on opposite sides, Tories then say they would vote 41 per cent to 38 per cent for Brexit.

Finally, suppose some kind of crisis erupts in the last two or three weeks of the campaign, over refugees, the stability of the eurozone, or whatever. I find it hard to imagine anything boosting British support for the EU—and easy to see how people might find the status quo not nearly as appealing. In that case the dangers of Brexit might well look far less frightening, and we might vote to end our 43-year marriage with our neighbours across the Channel. **P**



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# Who is David Cameron?

An elusive leader, best when things are broken

PHILIP COLLINS

It is both a strength and a weakness of a political personality that we cannot be quite sure who they are. A certain elusiveness means a politician can avoid being fixed and defined by events. Too little definition means a politician has nothing to draw on during the bad times. It is a difficult trick to pull and respect is therefore due to a man who has already been leader of the Conservative Party for a decade and Prime Minister for five years. It is also the conundrum that faces the biographer. What, in all the multitude of detail, is the telling fact? Where is the representative story? Who, in essence, is David Cameron? There are now two blockbusters, one from the now established team of contemporary historians, Anthony Seldon and Peter Snowdon, and one from the intriguing combination of Michael Ashcroft, the Tory donor, Conservative peer, serial pollster and once would-be Tory minister, and the political journalist Isabel Oakeshott.

I can testify to Cameron's elusiveness. When he became Tory leader in 2005, I was part of Tony Blair's team in Downing Street who had to work out how to deal with him. The Blair entourage and Gordon Brown's entourage, not for the first time, differed. The Brown team were convinced that Cameron needed to be defined early on as an ideological Tory of the worst stamp. The Blair team thought that was wrong on two counts: first, that it was arrogant to suppose that a politician can be defined principally by his opponents and, second, that it was too low a bar. If Labour declared Cameron's modernisation project to be entirely fictitious, then every counter-intuitive political move would look like a victory. There was another, unspoken, problem which is that none of us quite knew who the real David Cameron was. He had come late to the process of modernisation within the Conservative Party and his conversion seemed somewhat reluctant. The compromise we reached was that Cameron would try, without much conviction, to shift the Conservative Party but that the party would drag him back to the right.

After Cameron's speech to his party conference in October that analysis looks weaker than ever. He chose his biggest political address of the year to talk about a series of social problems: adoption, mental health, family breakdown. He took standing ovations from his party on issues that fall to the left rather than to the right. The speech was, strategically, an echo of George Osborne's

two days before. Politically, it was an indication that the Cameron Conservative Party was not about to leap back towards the right-wing comfort zone just because Labour had vacated winning territory and shifted to the left. Indeed, it was a strange week in Manchester because this was a Tory conference in which a hardline speech on crime, immigration and terrorism from a Conservative Home Secretary was a discordant note, rather than the central theme.

The question remains after Manchester, though, of whether this shift was more than a tactical manoeuvre designed to cement his party in power. Those around Cameron, who talked extensively to Seldon and Snowdon though rather less to Ashcroft and Oakeshott, insist that it is more than this. Here, they say, was the real David Cameron. Here, rather than in the internal blood feud of Europe or even the crucial question of

fiscal conservatism, you find the Prime Minister's irreducible core. There is passion lurking beneath that relaxed exterior and it could be called, if the phrase hadn't already been mothballed, the big society. We now have 10 years of leadership, five of which embraced the whole nation, to test that idea and here are two weighty treatments, more than 1,000 pages the pair, to help us come to a verdict.

The Ashcroft and Oakeshott book is already notorious. Whatever judicious prose is to be found within its covers has already been overshadowed. The volume was an event before it was a book. Whether the trashing of its reputation was worth a day's headlines about an incident with a pig's head at a hedonistic university party (not that it is likely ever to have happened) is a matter for the authors. I asked Oakeshott this question on stage at the Cheltenham Literature Festival recently and sensed some buried regret. When you read the incident in the context of the book, though, it is completely incidental. The real damage has been done at the start by Ashcroft.

Ashcroft's decision to write a preface, separated from the main body of the text and solely authored, is understandable. The book comes freighted with the knowledge that Ashcroft feels slighted by Cameron, most notably his belief that the Prime Minister reneged on a promise to make him a defence minister. It has been an open secret since then that, as Ashcroft puts it, their relationship was "somewhat strained." Ashcroft maintains that his motivation in writing the book was not "to settle scores" but anyone who feels the need to write a preface making that clear is probably protesting too much. There are many moments in this book when it doesn't seem that it is really about David Cameron at all. For a biography that is some deficiency. That impression is enhanced by the fact that Ashcroft's disavowal in his preface comes immediately after an unseemly ►

## Call me Dave: The Unauthorised Biography of David Cameron

by Michael Ashcroft and Isabel Oakeshott (*Biteback*, £20)

## Cameron at 10: The Inside Story 2010-2015

by Anthony Seldon and Peter Snowdon (*William Collins*, £20)

Philip Collins is a leader writer for the *Times* and former chief speech writer for Tony Blair. He is an Associate Editor of *Prospect*





© EDDIE KEOGH/REUTERS

David Cameron tackles the Great Brook run in Witney in 2014. Following him in the yellow top is his biographer Isabel Oakeshott



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David Cameron negotiating with François Hollande and Angela Merkel. The EU referendum will define his premiership

parade of his own dissatisfaction. He promises to tell the full story in his autobiography, and I for one can wait.

After that bombshell, Oakeshott has her work cut out to make sense of Cameron and there are passages where it seems she is not trying that hard. Both the scene and the tone are set in the opening chapter, entitled “Chipping Snorton,” which describes a New Year’s Eve party Cameron attended in Oxfordshire as “loud, boozy and perhaps not entirely free of class-A drugs.” The sources, like the pig observers, are all anonymous. In Cheltenham, Oakeshott conceded that these were stories which would,

.....



“Which section shall we join?”

at best, make diary items in a broadsheet newspaper. The unedifying speculation reaches fever pitch in a chapter about Cameron’s trip, as an 18-year-old in 1985, to the Crimea. Two men approached Cameron and his companion and asked them to dinner. Was this a failed attempt to recruit the future Prime Minister to the KGB? The fact that the source died two years ago does not prevent some more speculative guesswork.

Once we get past the prurience and innuendo there is a buried thesis here. It is that Cameron is an empty vessel. He is good but not very good; reasonable but not driven. Though my reference is altogether too lofty for the prose style employed, Ashcroft and Oakeshott paint Cameron as Prufrock: “an attendant lord, one that will do / To swell a progress, start a scene or two,” but no prince. In fact, they have assembled enough lurid stories to leave the impression that, like Prufrock again, Cameron is “at times, indeed, almost ridiculous— / Almost, at times, the Fool.” The picture is impressionistic and the swirling details, deliberately, do not penetrate the surface. The method is the message: Cameron is a wide boy but not deep. He wants nothing other than the title and he carries it all off as moderately well as an attendant lord can.

It is probable that, in the search for the core of David Cameron, the Oakeshott to consult might be the conservative philosopher Michael Oakeshott rather than Isabel. Cameron is a man with dispositions and inclinations of temperament rather than fixed beliefs. He is not a man on a mission but a man who sees a society that might be better. He no more comes armed with a theory than the plumber uses a theory of the bathroom to inspect the broken tap. Cameron is at his ▶



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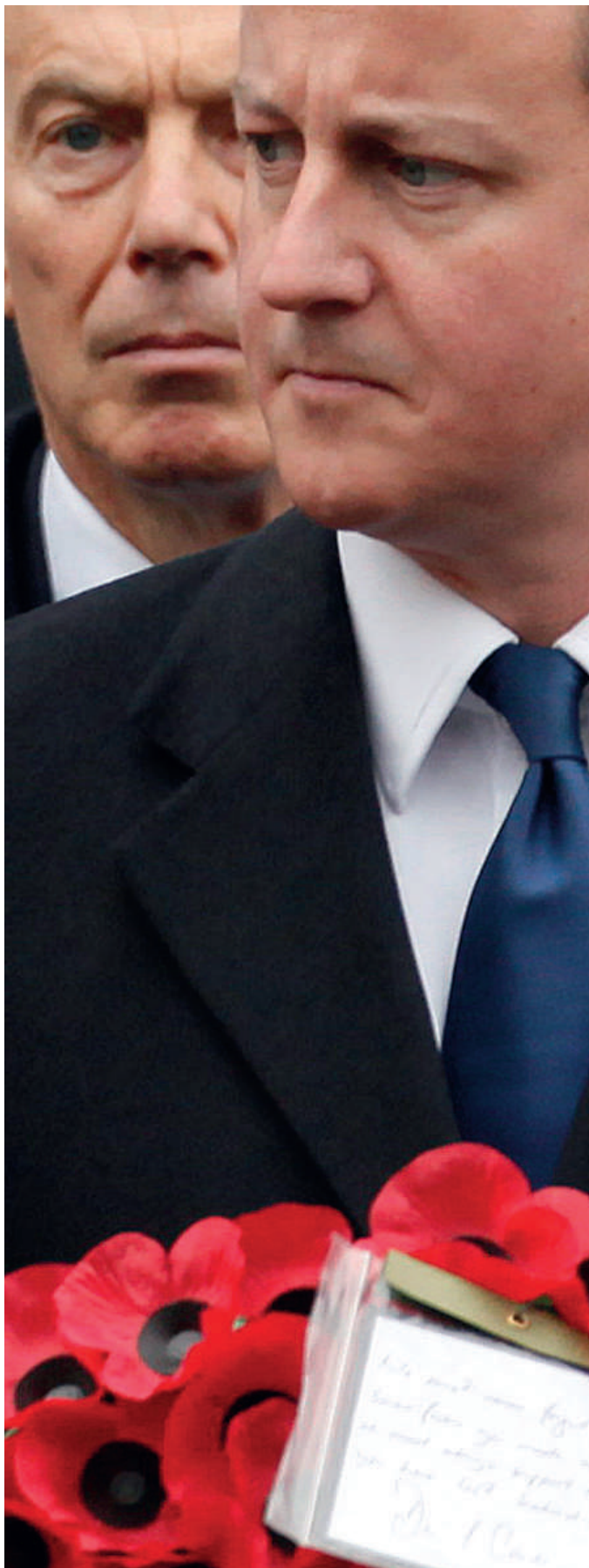
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**Heir to Tony Blair?** David Cameron's leadership style is "much more sotto voce" than his predecessor

best when things are broken and he can set about fixing them. This is why his early slogans pretended something he has never really believed—that Britain is broken. Broken politics, economy and society.

This is to place Cameron very much within a conservative philosophical tradition, and the question as to quite where in that tradition is one that preoccupies Seldon and Snowdon. *Cameron at 10*, unlike *Call Me Dave*, reads like the work of a single author. Seldon and Snowdon could be a single person called, say, Seldon, or perhaps Snowdon.

They see Cameron not as a latter-day Harold Macmillan, the patrician ruler to whom he is most often compared, but Stanley Baldwin, especially in his days as second-in-charge in the coalition led by Ramsay MacDonald between 1931 and 1935. There is

**“Cameron is a practical rather than a theoretical man. He is also prepared to shift his party along if he believes he needs to”**

something in this but perhaps not enough to survive as a settled verdict. After all, Baldwin had a decade before he lost an election by placing the Tory party on the side of national protection and against free trade. Baldwin really was a manager and he really was someone who, in a more relaxed age, knew how to take it easy. Seldon and Snowdon's extraordinarily detailed account of just how much the Prime Minister has to do lays to rest the nonsense that Cameron is lazy. He doesn't come across as a modern Baldwin.

He does, however, emerge from their portrait as one who answers the famous description in “If” by Baldwin's cousin Rudyard Kipling. The trade of politics swings from triumph to disaster in quick succession and Cameron seems to treat those two impostors just the same. Seldon's previous volume *Brown At 10* was a portrait of a man teetering on the edge. By comparison, Cameron copes admirably. In fact, a far more recent comparison suggests itself, one that Seldon himself has seeded. This book is the latest in a series, beginning with *Blair*, in which Seldon and various co-writers have sought to depict the premiership in exhaustive detail. Taken as a box set, the Brown book reads like a madcap escapade between the two serious practitioners, Blair and Cameron.

The parallel extends into policy too. In health, education and welfare, the Conservative-Lib Dem coalition and now the Conservative government extended reforms that were begun in the later Blair years. Seldon's first Blair book took the conventional view that Blair was good at first and went bad. His second, more complete, book took the opposite and, in my view correct, view that Blair didn't know who he was at first but gradually found a governing philosophy in office. With due allowance for their differences, Cameron has carried much of this on and the continuity between the two volumes is clear.

The difference may be in the degree of ostentation displayed by the two principals. Blair carried his mission on his sleeve. Cameron is much more sotto voce. Seldon and Snowdon do not make Ashcroft and Oakeshott's mistake of disallowing achievements that come from other members of the government. On this their

judgement is sound. Cameron has been a permissive rather than a demanding premier. He may not be across the detail of the free schools revolution but Michael Gove knew he had the political cover to push the policy through. Blair was all over the policy, driving it on. Cameron let it happen. The point remains, though, that he could have stopped it and chose not to. The authors of *Cameron at 10* give him the credit for that licence, as indeed they should.

The limitations of their book are the limitations of the form. They make a good case that Cameron may leave office with a surprisingly substantial legacy. But we cannot really know because the question of Europe threatens everything. If Cameron loses the EU referendum then it will dominate his legacy as much as Iraq dominates Tony Blair's. This is the problem with writing history while it is still unfolding. All events change in the light of their consequences and it is impossible to come to any verdict yet on the pivotal event in Cameron's time as prime minister. He could yet turn out to be the man who saved the union and kept Britain in the EU. He could be the man who took Britain out of Europe by accident and thereby fatally wounded the union. And all points in between: we just don't know yet.

One of the virtues of historical writing, the benefit of hindsight, is not available to the contemporary historian. Seldon and Snowden fill the gap with detail, of which they have an abundance, perhaps too much. It must be axiomatic that any first draft of history that cites me as an authority requires a second draft. Certainly, if you want to know what was in the washing machine while Cameron and George Osborne were discussing policy, Seldon and Snowden are

your men. Not all of this will survive the process of historical recollection, which will be a slow winnowing out until the important events survive. The comprehensive coverage of *Cameron at 10* means that this will be the source from which that winnowing proceeds.

That is why, in the end, the Seldon and Snowden book is the superior volume. It is not just the way it is written but the purpose. Seldon and Snowden are only concerned with Cameron as prime minister. They write sensitively and unobtrusively about the sad death of Cameron's son Ivan and his wife and children are regular characters in the story, but all only in as much as they elucidate the way Cameron does his job. In a way, the public focus of the book makes for a more rounded picture of the private man. Seldon and Snowden have written a book which adds to our knowledge. As a more conventional biography, Ashcroft and Oakeshott are competing more with Francis Elliot and James Hanning's excellent 2007 book *Practically A Conservative*. They unearth plenty of new information but the reader does not trust much of it and their judgements seem irredeemably compromised by Ashcroft's preface.

Practically a conservative remains the right verdict, and it is the one that Seldon and Snowden come to. It is true in both senses. Cameron is a practical rather than a theoretical man. He is also prepared to shift his party along if he believes he needs to. Seldon and Snowden do not spare Cameron on his blind spots, especially on foreign policy, but they clearly admire the Prime Minister and regard him as a worthy occupant of the office. The big question will now be set. We shall soon find out if they are right. ■

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Image: the Seine outside Paris, 19th-century lithograph.

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# Having it all

Professional women need to trust their spouses to do the childcare—and earn a lot

CATHY NEWMAN

I remember agonising, the day before I had lunch with Tony Blair for the first time, over what my opening question to him should be. Something about Iraq? Or something more lateral and icebreaking—about his kids, maybe, or his taste in pop music? In the event I staggered into No 10 just in time to ask his aides where the toilet was before disaster struck. Norovirus was sweeping through our house. I'd spent most of the previous night comforting my daughter while feeding bedclothes into the washing machine, my husband having announced that he was too ill to do anything except lie curled up on the floor. I felt tired but nausea-free as I set off for Downing Street; rather peakier once I got there. I should probably have called in sick. But this was a key assignment for me and I wasn't about to pass it down the line.

Such are the tribulations of working parenthood. This episode and others like it flashed through my mind as I read Anne-Marie Slaughter's flawed but valuable polemic on the subject, *Unfinished Business*. Back in 2012, Slaughter wrote a piece for the *Atlantic* which became one of the most widely read articles in the magazine's 150-year history with an estimated 2.7m views. (You can see why a publisher thought padding it out to book length would be a good idea). "Why Women Still Can't Have It All" addressed the difficulties encountered by professional women with children. A controlled blast of righteous rage, it found the law professor and former Princeton University dean—now President and CEO of the thinktank New America—explaining why, after spending two years as the first female Director of Policy Planning at the State Department under Hillary Clinton, she was quitting Washington DC and returning to full-time teaching at Princeton. She had felt obliged to make this choice because "juggling high-level government work with the needs of two teenage boys was not possible."

The reaction from friends and colleagues to what they regarded as her "dropping out" was disappointment, disapproval and—worse still—pity: "I was, in effect, painted as someone who just couldn't cut it or couldn't manage the juggle of work and family," she writes, "when in fact I was still teaching a full load, writing regular columns on foreign policy, giving 30 or 40 speeches a year, and working on a new book."

The predicament Slaughter found herself in triggered an existential crisis. For years she had believed she could "have it

all" and had duly done the rounds of universities selling this possibility to eager grad students. Suddenly she realised that both the gender pay gap and the lack of women in senior positions were partly attributable to an ingrained sexism that saw caregiving, whether to children or ageing parents, as (a) a job for women and (b) a fluffy, low-value job undeserving of respect or decent remuneration. When women went off on maternity leave,

their stock plummeted in anticipation of the missed meetings and loss of focus that surely lay ahead. She quotes the hedge fund billionaire Paul Tudor Jones, who voiced the unspoken prejudices of many male bosses when he remarked of a former associate:

"As soon as that baby's lips touched that girl's bosom, forget it."

In the most rousing, radical sections of the book, Slaughter calls for nothing less than a workplace revolution and the building of a whole new "infrastructure of care." We should think about paid caregiving "the same way we think about any other profession, including money management." Gender roles must be recalibrated so that domestic responsibilities are no longer a female preserve. Flexible working practices should benefit employees rather than employers: she cites the case of Starbucks barista and single mother Jannette Navarro whose maddening schedule, dictated by whimsical data analysis of customer flow, sometimes required her to shut up a store at 11pm and open it the following morning at 4am. "Leaning in" is all very well, but women "still run up against insuperable obstacles created by the combination of unpredictable life circumstances and the rigid inflexibilities of our workplaces," not to mention cultural attitudes that "devalue them the minute they step out, or even just lean back, from the work force."

Though her *Atlantic* article was mostly well received, Slaughter was criticised in some quarters for promoting a "plutocrat feminism" concerned only with the plight of powerful women. *Unfinished Business* finds Slaughter trying harder on that score, to the point where some of the privilege-checking feels rather masochistic. It is nevertheless the case that the rarefied realm she inhabits sets limits on how relevant the book could possibly be to the lives of ordinary working women, particularly in the UK. For the US can be a tricky place to work and have children (unless you're in the military or employed at places like Google or the Mayo Clinic which boast state-of-the-art childcare facilities). And Washington DC in particular has its own professional microclimate. Where work and parenthood are concerned, it incubates some distinctive pathologies.

Fifteen years ago, before I had children, I spent six months working at the *Washington Post*. Although I'd joined Fleet Street years after the liquid lunch fell out of favour, I was immediately struck by how damn hard journalists in DC worked—both men

## Unfinished Business: Women, Men, Work, Power

by Anne-Marie Slaughter (*Oneworld*, £16.99)



Cathy Newman is a presenter of Channel 4 News

and women. There was an admirable dedication to the story, a slavish devotion to fact-checking and an almost complete absence of holidays. Unfettered by family myself, I found it exhilarating, and I lived and worked the dream. But had I had children then either my personal or professional life might well have turned rapidly sour.

**L**ife on Capitol Hill is hard and demanding. It is normal to work from 8am to 8pm and in fact most key decisions are taken outside “normal” business hours. The problem with this is that, as one former Capitol Hill staffer recently explained to me, “if you’re not physically present for these key conversations, you render yourself moot or somehow less essential.” There is nominal observation of big holidays

## “The US can be a tricky place to work and have children. Life on Capitol Hill is hard and demanding”

like Christmas and Easter, but no family occasion is sacrosanct. My source continued: “I remember in 2008, President [George W] Bush pocket vetoed the National Defence Authorisation Act on Christmas Day and we had to work to deal with that on Christmas itself. I have plenty of friends who have missed friends’ weddings and cancelled expensive vacations because legislation was coming to the floors of Congress that they had to be present for.

“The unique dynamic in DC is you can have moms in very high profile political jobs that are incredibly time-consuming and then dads in non-political/corporate/legal jobs which require less time at the office but are also more highly compensated. So you have this ironic dynamic where the public sector parent is working more and making less and the dads are working less, making more and having to pick up the slack with the family. It can create tension in marriages.”

So what of Slaughter’s own marriage? Certainly, she seems unwilling or unable to take her own home-front advice. At the start of the book she links her decision to return to Princeton to problems within her family. For two years she commuted between Washington and the family home. She would spend all week in DC, return to Princeton late on Fridays in time for the

weekend, then leave again at 5am on Monday. In poignant detail she describes the upset this regime caused. Her youngest son, 10 when she started her State Department job in 2009, would cry on Sunday nights when he knew she had to leave the next day.

Her eldest son seemed at first to understand the pressure his mother was under but went off the rails the second puberty hit: “His friends changed, and over the next 18 months he started skipping homework, disrupting classes, failing math, and tuning out any adult who tried to reach him. He fought with his father and did his best to ignore me completely.” In eighth grade (aged 13 or 14) his behaviour worsened and Slaughter cites an incident—we never find out exactly what it was—that led to his suspension from school and questioning by the local police.

And this is where Slaughter undermines her own argument. Even though “Andy [her husband] was there... doing his level best as the home parent... my son was constantly on my mind. As much as I loved the work I was doing, I would get a call or a text with the latest upset and wonder why on earth I was sitting in DC when my son needed me in Princeton.”

I don’t mean for a second to suggest that Slaughter shouldn’t have felt upset and conflicted here. The pull of home and family has a tidal strength and for such a hyper-competent woman the compulsion to intervene must have been almost impossible to suppress. But to answer Slaughter’s own question: you are ►

Anne-Marie Slaughter found juggling a high-level government job with family life impossible



sitting in DC because your hugely important job, which you do brilliantly, is contributing to the safety of the free world and anyway *your husband is at home looking after the kids!* This puts you in a lucky minority. But his contribution counts for nothing if you don't have the confidence to let him make it.

Slaughter says that the crisis with her son “forced me to confront what was important to me, rather than what I was conditioned to want.” It encouraged her to question the “feminist

## “Why must women keep in their heads a definition of ‘good motherhood’ robust enough to blank out guilt?”

narrative” she had grown up believing. Reading *Unfinished Business*, though, it isn't the feminist narrative that's the problem—it's Slaughter's desire to be at home cooking her boys hearty home-made breakfasts. She calls this a “deep evolutionary urge.” But that's like my husband saying he has a deep evolutionary urge to go to the pub when the kids' bedtime gets a bit shouty.

The spurious link Slaughter posits between her absence and her son's bad behaviour goes to the heart of what it means to be a “good mother.” “The supposed contradiction between work and motherhood is a mirage, a modern cultural construct,” wrote Kate Figs in her 1998 book *Life After Birth*. That might seem a lofty generalisation from the vantage point of a 21st-century world where work follows you home in a way it never did in the last century. But what Figs means, she goes on to clarify, is that “mothers of the past had little choice but to see their roles of mother and worker as interdependent rather than mutually exclusive.” Upper-class women might not have worked, but lower down the social scale they did, on farms and in factories. These women didn't beat themselves up about working. They just accepted that it had to be done, and their children worked too from a young age. (I am not advocating child labour, just reminding you that it was once unexceptional.)

The idealisation of maternal domesticity occurred in the late 18th century following the publication of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's novel-cum-childcare manual *Emile, or On Education* in 1762. *Emile* introduced the idea that motherhood should be a source of pleasure and satisfaction; also that this should involve elements of guilt and self-sacrifice. No, women should not go out to work because, in Rousseau's words, “the true mother, ▶



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80 YEARS IN THE MAKING



**Family man:** Nick Clegg with his wife, Miriam González Durántez, and infant son Miguel

far from being a woman of the world, is as much a recluse in her home as the nun is in her cloister.”

Just because women have a greater awareness of domestic duties—making packed lunches, keeping up with the washing—that doesn’t mean they should be the ones doing them. Why does it fall to women to keep the show on the road? Why must women constantly keep in their heads a definition of “good motherhood” robust enough to blank out the static buzz of guilt and confusion, when for some men “good fatherhood” involves little more

## “Successful women like Slaughter are often fiercely driven and perfectionist and struggle with delegating”

than the odd kickabout in the park? I say “some men”—obviously, many are excellent caregivers, including my husband, whose lucky ability to work from home and so do the bulk of the childcare enables me to do my better-remunerated job. (Slaughter is very funny about what she calls “halo dad syndrome” whereby “fathers do what is routinely expected of mothers and are treated as if they are extraordinary.”)

The elephant in the room—a big one, wearing a flashing tiara and doing back-flips—is money. An unintentionally hilarious article in *Fortune* earlier this year was entitled “Women with big jobs and big families: Balancing really isn’t that hard.” Among the women profiled was Jaime Teevan, a researcher with Microsoft Research and a professor at the University of Washington who has a six-year-old, an eight-year-old and a 10-year-old. Teevan explained that the family “[spent] money on things that make our lives easier.” This included employing a chef to cook vast batches of meals which could be frozen for use when necessary.

Slaughter admits that money gave her and her husband the ability to afford high-quality daycare when their children were

small and, later, a full-time housekeeper. Aha, I thought. I had wondered how on earth a self-declared “sleep evangelist” was able to secure for herself the seven or eight hours sleep a night which enables her to be “happier, pleasanter, and unquestionably more productive”: pay someone else to do all the chores.

Another problem—and I’m not criticising Slaughter here; she doesn’t have much to say on this subject—is the modern professional woman’s conception of a successful, happy childhood: children pinballing between violin lessons, football games and tutors, excelling in all areas because mere flourishing is no longer enough. In my experience, and at the risk of reinforcing a cliché, successful women like Slaughter are often fiercely driven and perfectionist; struggle with delegating; and unlikely to settle for second best in any aspect of their (or their children’s) lives. I can imagine how unsettling it must be for someone like this to find, just when she thought she’d got her family on an even keel, that her children needed her as much at 13 or 16 or 19 as they did at three.

Stepping back and allowing men to be involved—properly, independently involved—is crucial. What we need now is more exemplars. I cheered this week when Wisconsin congressman Paul Ryan declared that he would only agree to be Speaker of the House of Representatives, a job third in line to the presidency, if he was able to remain an involved father to his three children.

Blair, by contrast, decided not to take paternity leave after his son Leo was born in 2000. Instead he went into what he called “holiday mode” where he did slightly less work. But then, statutory paternity leave wasn’t introduced until 2003 and it was David Cameron who in 2010 became the first British Prime Minister to take it.

The senior male politician who always seemed the most involved in family life was Nick Clegg. Even when Deputy Prime Minister, he split the school run with his lawyer wife Miriam González Durántez and rushed home to help with bath-time. This is to be applauded, but Durántez, equally busy and pressured at work, grew justifiably angry when a journalist asked her how the family coped with her husband’s job. “No one would ask him how he balances everything,” she pointed out. Until they do, “unfinished business” is about the size of it. **P**



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# Compassion is not enough

Foreign aid should focus on finding jobs for people in poor countries—and Britain can lead the way

PAUL COLLIER

**A**head of the general election in May, parliament passed the International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act. This enshrined in law the UK's commitment to spend 0.7 per cent of national income on aid each year. What should that aid be used for over the next decade?

The UN recently came up with an answer: the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), designed to “end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.” Unfortunately, the SDGs are fatuous. By consulting widely the UN, perhaps inevitably, arrived at a vacuous compromise: 17 goals and 169 targets, in no discernible order of priority, which are supposed to apply to every country in the world. But saying that “everything matters everywhere” is merely another way of saying that “nothing in particular matters anywhere.” Troubled times demand a less frivolous response.

In the future, those disbursing aid should be ruthlessly selective about what they are trying to do and where they are trying to do it. The SDGs, however, are a licence for every development agency in the world to carry on doing what they want, since that will almost certainly be compatible with at least one of those 169 targets. Agencies that were once the flagships of international aid have given up trying to lead the rest of the world to anything more focused or coherent. The World Bank has spiralled into a vortex of demoralisation, while the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been hijacked by Congressional lobbies that tie every line of its budget to some special interest or other. The one outstanding exception is Britain's own development agency, the Department for International Development (DfID). Not only does it have a big budget, it has coherent objectives and is intelligently led. While the UK's diplomatic and military influence has waned, its influence on development issues has grown. What DfID does matters for both its direct impact and for its indirect influence on policies elsewhere. So what should its agenda be?

It should start by determining priorities. Aid agencies seldom do this because it is painful and requires vested interests to be confronted rather than accommodated. But the goal of

ending poverty through economic growth is too important for indulgent, feel-good romanticism. Compassion has to be firmly chained to realism. It cannot be a priority, therefore, for British aid to relieve poverty in those societies that are rich enough to do so themselves. There are many poor people in middle-income countries and the 34 member states of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)—they are sprawled on the sidewalks near the White House and crowded into the favelas of Brazil. It is a delusion to suppose that these people are Britain's responsibility. Countries like the US and Brazil have large and affluent middle classes. How generous these societies are to their less fortunate citizens is a matter for them.

So what should DfID's purpose be? In my view, there are three ethical foundations for development assistance: a duty of rescue; the pursuit of mutual benefit; and the provision of public goods.

A duty of rescue sounds humanitarian, and conjures up images of refugees being fished out of the sea. But it shouldn't apply just in situations of immediate despair. Development assistance ought primarily to be about rescuing societies from hopelessness. Snapshots of global poverty do not measure the psychological damage done by being in poverty, which depends upon how long people expect to remain poor. If there is a credible chance that their children will have a different, better life, most parents are willing to tolerate poverty in the here-and-now. That is the story of immigrants through the ages. And most societies now provide credible hope to the vast majority of their citizens. The most dramatic expansion of hope in history took place in China after 1990. This was driven not by aid but by trade. But some poor societies are still not safely on the path towards economic convergence with the rest of mankind. There is a huge psychological difference between being poor in China and being poor in Chad.

During the last decade many poor and stagnant societies at last appeared to be catching up. But we cannot be confident that this will continue—the last decade was exceptionally benign for them. It began with debt relief, continued with a historically unprecedented rise in the prices of their commodity exports, was amplified by new resource discoveries and closed with new international borrowing made possible by the equally unprecedented abundance of cheap global capital. The prospects for the coming decade look far less benign for these countries. They are indebted once again, export prices have crashed, new projects are being put on hold and their access to credit markets is shrinking.

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In most of Africa, much of central Asia and elsewhere in countries such as Haiti and Laos, aid could help to generate economic growth. But aid alone will not enable these societies to catch up, however much is provided. Growth in a given country is driven predominantly by the response of the private sector to domestic policy choices. Over the past two centuries, the

## “Aid alone will not enable poor countries to catch up with the rest of the world, however much is provided”

genius of capitalism has been to generate organisations—firms—in which ordinary people become hugely more productive than they are in traditional or feudal economies. Firms do this by harnessing scale and specialisation while maintaining worker motivation. For entirely rational reasons, not enough of them want to operate in very poor societies. Policies adopted by the governments in such countries are often inadequate, and many firms are justifiably terrified of the reputational risk to which they are likely to be exposed if they operate in cultures of corruption. Aid cannot buy good policies. That was the assumption behind the failed practice of “donor conditionality” (attaching conditions to aid). If a government does not want to implement a policy it will find ways of undermining it. In the future, the core function of aid agencies should be to induce more firms to go to places that they would otherwise have avoided—either by financ-

ing the power and transport infrastructure (ludicrously not an SDG) without which modern firms cannot operate, or by partnering with them through global public bodies such as the CDC, a development finance institution that is a subsidiary of DfID, and the International Finance Corporation and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, both members of the World Bank Group.

There is also scope for aid to help governments implement their policies by strengthening key state systems such as tax authorities and expenditure tracking. This would not be the tired old practice of “capacity building” which involved training individual officials in specific skills, but rather the building of motivated teams working to clear mandates, often through long-term twinning with counterpart institutions in the OECD.

This is a practical agenda for rescuing societies from hopelessness. It is a far cry from the photogenic social agenda into which western aid was diverted by the UN’s Millennium Development Goals.

During the golden age of compassionate aid, any suggestion that some aid might be designed to benefit the donor as well as the recipient was unconscionable. But aid as a one-way-street of compassion turned sour. NGOs, to whom donor agencies became increasingly beholden, began to festoon compassion with conditions. The conditions might be environmental (no coal), social (no dams), political (hold elections) or else reflect western preoccupations with human rights (the treatment of gays, women or journalists). For example, the Sierra Club, a powerful western environmental lobby, has been able to veto the construction of dams. I recall the outrage of a ▶

Refugees arriving on the Greek island of Lesbos: “The response to the Syrian crisis reflects policies unchanged since 1947”



Laotian hydro specialist at the prospect of a further decade without electricity. I also recall being invited by a former Shadow Secretary of State for Development to a meeting at which an aide proposed that at least 90 per cent of DfID projects should have gender equality as their first priority. The crusading participants in this meeting were oblivious to their re-enactment of imperialism. These objectives were, to western eyes, unexceptionable, but as conditions attached to a duty to rescue they were indefensible. It was like saying, "We'll fish you out of the water as long as you promise to..." The only conceivably defensible condition for a duty of rescue is "as long as you promise not to jump back in," but it would, of course, be unenforceable. Recipient societies did not see such aid as reflecting a higher morality of compassion. They saw the rich imposing their values on the poor.

Contrast this with growing Chinese engagement with Africa, which has been based explicitly on the notion of mutual benefit. This has often amounted to natural resources being exchanged for economic infrastructure investment on terms that were opaque and sometimes onerous. But the infrastructure was meeting an agenda set by the poor societies themselves, not the preferences of rich societies. Furthermore, because the Chinese were benefiting too, the deals were not demeaning. Much of the legitimate criticism of the Chinese deals has had to do with the fact that they had a near-monopoly. It is time, therefore, for western agencies to compete with Chinese aid packages, commercial bank finance, construction companies and resource companies. The governments of poor countries seeking such packages could then consider tenders from rival consortia, rather than having to negotiate a deal with

## "Chinese engagement with Africa has been based explicitly on the notion of mutual benefit"

the Chinese alone. The west could also partner with China. Indeed, the UK has already made a start. When China established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in October 2014, Britain took the right decision and joined in March this year. The US, not even content to sulk on the sidelines (a stance now dignified as "leading from behind"), publicly criticised the British decision.

The term used to describe countries at serious risk of descending into mass violence is "fragile." There are three lists of fragile countries maintained by global institutions, with around 40 states on them. Many of these societies are also covered by the duty to rescue from hopelessness, but others are technically "middle-income countries." Societies that are in active conflict, like Syria currently, give rise to a duty of rescue from fear. But for those fragile states not in open conflict there is a clear global



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**Britain has helped 6.5m girls in poor countries to go to school, but there is more to be done**

self-interest in reducing risks, as conflict creates major problems for other societies. To put it another way, addressing fragility is a global public good.

Even in circumstances of active conflict, development assistance could play a vital role. In the Syrian crisis we urgently need development aid to reinforce humanitarian aid. The response of the international agencies to the Syrian refugee crisis has reflected policies unchanged since 1947. Refugees are housed and fed as if they were all children; as economic actors they have been left to rot, not allowed to work. Organised into silos, the UN classifies the treatment of refugees entirely as a humanitarian issue for which the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible. Economic interventions, which are the responsibility of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have to await a post-conflict peace. In the refugee camps of Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon the World Bank is absent for a similarly ludicrous reason. The refugees are in countries that are classified as "upper-middle-income." Since there is no distinct funding window for refugees, they are deemed to be too rich to be eligible for significant funding. Subjected to enough pressure, these multilateral agencies will eventually change their approach, but it will take years to adjust their ossified bureaucracies.

The bilateral development agencies have the ability to be more fleet-of-foot: DfID may well be in the lead. Development aid could and should partner with business to bring Syrian refugees jobs in these neighbouring countries where the displaced are overwhelmingly located. For example, the largest refugee camp in Jordan is just minutes away from a vast, empty industrial zone, fully equipped with infrastructure, that could house global businesses and be a safe haven for Syrian firms, too. The aid budgets for post-conflict economic recovery could usefully be spent right now on incubating a future Syrian economy-in-waiting. The focus of the duty of rescue from fear should shift from the irresponsible (and apparently retractable) promises of Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, who has paraded her conscience around Europe while fussing over thousands, to a

practical jobs-focused agenda that would work for the displaced millions.

As to fragile countries not in open conflict, while money cannot buy stability, growth does gradually help to make societies more secure. As part of a package of policies, well-designed aid can help. Learning how to operate effectively in fragile societies is a pressing priority for OECD governments. Huge mistakes have been made, in both aid and security policies. The Sahel and Central Asia are both impoverished fragile regions where, to date, engagement has often been ill-conceived. Mali, Burkina Faso, Northern Nigeria and South Sudan in the Sahel have all recently teetered on the edge of major disorder. A new study by the French development expert Serge Michailof warns that this region could become the next Afghanistan. Since pre-empting such a catastrophe is much more feasible than responding to it, Europe urgently needs to act. Aid alone will be insufficient, but poverty is at the root of instability in the Sahel.

In Afghanistan itself the west needs to learn from and rectify an aid disaster. Western intervention began with an

## “Huge mistakes have been made, both in aid and security policy in Africa and Central Asia”

absurdly overloaded agenda of nice-to-haves: the eradication of drug cultivation (a gift horse to Taliban recruitment); frequent multi-party elections (so destabilising that John Kerry, the US Secretary of State, finally flew in following the last election to ask them to delay releasing the results while he tried to negotiate a power-sharing deal); gender equality. A 21st-century democracy was never likely to take root in Afghanistan. The insistence on trying to create one has saddled the Afghan government with a cost base that is simply unviable. In the process it has reduced the scope for an Afghan-led agenda which would most surely have prioritised using temporary western assistance to build secure domestic military control of territory. In September, the city of Kunduz, defended by 7,000 soldiers of the Afghan army, was overrun by the Taliban.

Reducing fragility is probably the only public good for which aid should be used. Currently, much aid is being used to reduce carbon emissions. I am doubtful that this is a legitimate use of aid. It is an example of our tendency to persuade ourselves that our agenda should be that of poor countries too. Reducing carbon emissions is indeed a global public good for which most nations should be cajoled into contributing. The poorest countries, however, should not be so cajoled. Sometimes it will be more cost-effective to reduce carbon emissions in poor countries than to make the equivalent reduction in rich countries. But paying for such reductions should not be conceived as aid to them. Unlike addressing fragility, the predominant beneficiary is not the poor country itself, but the rest of the world. The rationale for financing such projects is thus the self-interest of the rest of the world. They should be financed out of the large OECD budgets for climate change, not the more modest aid budgets.

For two decades, the British public has been fed a relent-

lessly humanitarian aid agenda. Aid, it has been said, is there to put a smile on a child's face. In many poor societies, unlike two decades ago, that child now survives and goes to school—aid-financed social spending has helped. But once that child leaves school hopelessness sets in. The governments of poor countries, not donors, should be putting smiles on children's faces. If they do not take responsibility for a rudimentary social agenda they have little hope of legitimacy. But in many poor countries it is beyond the capacity of their governments alone to offer credible hope of future prosperity, even if they do the right things. An aid agenda of bringing productive jobs to poor people, leveraging private investment into their threadbare economies and pre-empting fragility in dangerous places may not be as photogenic as a child's smile; but it is not beyond the comprehension of ordinary British citizens. It is time to tell them.

Instead, they are fed a relentless drizzle of hostility from the anti-aid right and the anti-business left. Take a typical *Daily Mail* story from this year which asserted that £2m “may have been wasted” on helping Northern Nigeria to export leather. Yes, Northern Nigeria where the Islamist group Boko Haram is recruiting young men to kidnap schoolgirls. In other words, it is fragile. I do not know whether this project succeeded or failed, but it is surely the sort of project that is worth trying. We have heard this kind of thing from the left as well. Margaret Hodge, the Labour MP who chairs the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, has criticised DfID for funding the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG). “Every pound that is lost to fraud and corruption,” Hodge said, “could have been spent on educating a child.” This word-perfect expression of the philosophy of the smiley face could not be more wrong-headed. PIDG is DfID at its best, and has already attracted funding from three other bilateral aid agencies. To demand a cast-iron assurance that a supported venture will be run successfully and honestly in a difficult environment would have the effect of closing all activity down. It would equally close down funding for governments to run schools: there is no easy choice between “clean” funding of education and “corrupt” funding of business. Should we require public venture capital in such places to do what even private venture capital in easy places cannot achieve?

Ordinary citizens will have to look beyond views such as these. Properly directed, aid is a sensible response to troubled times. While DfID is excoriated at home, it is admired abroad. We should be proud of it, and give it the political space to lead the global aid community towards a more focused agenda. **P**



“We all have to make sacrifices, Wilkins, and you're mine”

# Is the House of Saud about to fall?

Its strength and resilience are greater than many realise,  
but there are real signs of strain

WILLIAM PATEY

**For decades, western governments have fretted over the possibility that Saudi Arabia would plunge into turmoil. The retort from Saudis has been that other countries do not appreciate how much the country has changed (without a revolution). But the past year has brought falling oil prices, the strain of the Saudi military intervention against Iranian-backed groups in Yemen, tension with the United States over the Iran deal and Arab Spring, tension with the UK over human rights, and more than 2,000 deaths in two accidents at the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca in September. In October, there were reports that eight of the 12 surviving sons of Saudi Arabia's founding monarch support a move to oust King Salman, 79, who took the throne in January, on grounds of incompetence. That has given new sharpness to the question: How worried should we be about Saudi Arabia?**

**T**here are reasons to be worried, and more than usual, but we should not exaggerate them. Saudi Arabia's resilience is hugely underappreciated. But while the risk is small, the consequences for us would be calamitous. That is the real reason to worry—and there is quite a bit we can do to help.

Other governments have always worried about Saudi Arabia. I have never known a period when they did not. In the mid-1990s, everybody was worried because of low oil prices and the beginnings of terrorist activity, about which the Saudis were initially in denial. As western officials and diplomats, we were also going through the post-mortem of why we had not predicted the fall of the Shah in Iran, and the risk of being complacent was seared in all our minds. All the same, nearly every British ambassador had to spend a lot of time arguing to Whitehall that, contrary to its fears, Saudi Arabia was not about to collapse.

Nobody predicted the Arab Spring, but it did not surprise me that Saudi Arabia has proved resilient in the face of that upheaval. If you look at what was common to the republics that fell—I call them republics kindly, but they were more like republican dictatorships—it was that they had become family dicta-

torships built around one man, their leadership had become sclerotic, they had lost the confidence of the elites around them and they began to mismanage their economies. There was brutal oppression in order to stay in power, and widespread resentment towards the sons of the dictators, combined with an unwillingness among the army and the elites to defend the regime.

Saudi Arabia is different. There are a lot of reasons why there has not been an Arab Spring there. The elites have a huge vested interest in Saudi Arabia—the family is not run by just a small group of people. There is a very large royal family which reaches into the furthest parts of the country, with a good network for listening to people and a track record of delivering reasonable economic competence. They have run the country pretty well. That is a function of oil wealth but also of the fact that they promote good technocrats to run it, and have a system of not allowing members of the royal family into positions of power if they are essentially not competent. The selection of kings has been based on merit as well as seniority. That has been its strength.

There is also a kind of pact between the ruling family and the religious establishment. This is a constraint on how fast Saudi Arabia can modernise, but in a conservative Islamic country, it is also a force for stability.

These sources of resilience are unique to Saudi Arabia but you might argue that they are echoed in the Arab monarchies generally, and are a reason why those countries have not undergone the upheaval of an Arab Spring. Look at Morocco's King Mohammed, King Abdullah in Jordan and al Nahyan family in the United Arab Emirates—none of them has resorted to armed repression of their people to maintain power. They have been sufficiently flexible in repressing some, co-opting others and in making adjustments. It obviously helps if you have got a lot of money—yet that is not true of Jordan or Morocco. The monarchies have proved more flexible than the republics.

The Saudi military is quite different from those of the republics that fell, and this is another source of stability. There are different command structures, and I think that is designed to reduce the possibility of a military coup. The command structure is so diffuse that the number of people who would have to be involved in a coup would make it almost impossible to succeed. So you can discount a military coup.

You can discount an Islamic popular revolution, too. The elites don't like the idea—and the Arab Spring has reinforced their conservatism. It has proved a lesson for everyone that the uncertainty of what follows is too formidable. Too many people

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Saudi Arabia's King Salman, centre, with Crown Prince Muqrin (third from left) and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Nayef (far left) in January. The instability of the region is adding to the strain on the Saudis

have vested interests in the success of al Saud. Given the importance of Saudi Arabia and its structure of alliances with the west you can discount external invasion, too, for example from Iran or in the past Iraq.

What are you left with? The one factor that has always been capable of threatening the stability of Saudi Arabia is serious disputes within al Saud itself—members of the family falling out with each other, and forming different factions. But we should remember that the history of al Saud is that they sort problems out among themselves. There have been disputes that we in the west have found out about only much later.

However, what is interesting about the current state of affairs is that some of the tensions and discussions are beginning to surface in public. Whether or not the recent alleged letters from princes about King Salman's competence really exist, there clearly is a much bigger debate going on about who will succeed him and who is exercising real authority currently. Rumours about King Salman's health refuse to go away and the relationship between Prince Mohammad bin Salman and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Nayef is also subject to much speculation. There is also a suggestion that Prince Ahmed, one of the remaining sons of King Abdulaziz and King Salman's full brother, may not have entirely given up his ambitions.

So there is a level of uncertainty about the future beyond King Salman which is being played out more in public than would normally be the case. But my prediction is that the family councils of al Saud will sort it out. They have always done so in the past.

Many Saudis have pointed out to me that the decision-making lines have been shortened, and that decisions are now taken much more quickly. There are a number of younger, technocratic ministers who have not been in their posts for 30 years. That doesn't mean they are making the right decisions, of

## “Uncertainty about the future beyond King Salman is being played out in public”

course, but they are making them much faster. The test of this will be how they handle the two big external strains which have now appeared.

The first is the fall in the oil price to around \$50 a barrel—half the level of two years ago—which confronts them with some hard and urgent decisions. It does give them budget problems. They can adjust in the longer term, but their budget is currently based on a price of \$90-100 a barrel and in the short term, they are having to cash in some of their assets. They have a lot of liquidity but I would not expect to see the same levels of expenditure for the next five years. There will be budget adjustments, and probably a slowdown in some of the big infrastructure projects.

Separately, the instability of the region is adding to the strain on the Saudi government—and on relations with its allies in the west. The Middle East is as unstable as it has ever been in the ►



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**Prince Mohammad bin Salman, 30, and the son of King Salman, is Saudi Minister of Defence**

modern history of Saudi Arabia. Following the nuclear deal, the Saudis fear an emboldened Iran increasing its influence in the region at their expense. They see themselves as surrounded by Iran and its agents, whether Hezbollah in Lebanon or President Bashar al-Assad in Syria or a Shia majority government in Iraq. The future of Yemen for them is existential: they cannot afford Yemen to be run as an Iranian satellite, and firmly believe that the Iranians were behind the Houthi rebellion.

Traditionally, the Saudis might have looked to the US to sort out Yemen for them, as they would once have expected the US to be sorting out Syria and Iraq. A firm pillar of Saudi foreign policy has been a confidence that Gulf security was in the hands of the US, that the US was committed to this, that the US would be a friend and competent ally. This pillar has looked more insecure since the Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring and the US reaction to it shook their confi-

dence badly; they noted the ease with which the US abandoned its support for Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. They have seen the reduction in US engagement in the region, the absence of any coherent strategy and an unwillingness to get involved. In Iraq, they blame the Coalition forces for deposing Saddam Hussein and handing influence over the government to Iran. They have been genuinely worried that the Iran nuclear deal marked a strategic shift on the part of the US back to the days when the Shah was its favourite ally, and no amount of discussion about the value of engaging Iran in the region's problems seems to shake that. When the US appeared to draw a red line in Syria, over Assad's use of chemical weapons, and then did nothing when Assad then crossed it, America then seemed a less reliable ally.

The Saudis have started to hedge their bets and become more forthright, self-reliant and outward-looking in their policy—not necessarily consulting the US before acting.

Given these tensions in the relationship, the US has made some effort to reassure the Saudis, but more needs to be done.

## “The Saudis cannot afford Yemen to be run as an Iranian satellite”

The US would not allow Saudi Arabia to be threatened in any meaningful way by Iran, and it could usefully reinforce that point in Riyadh.

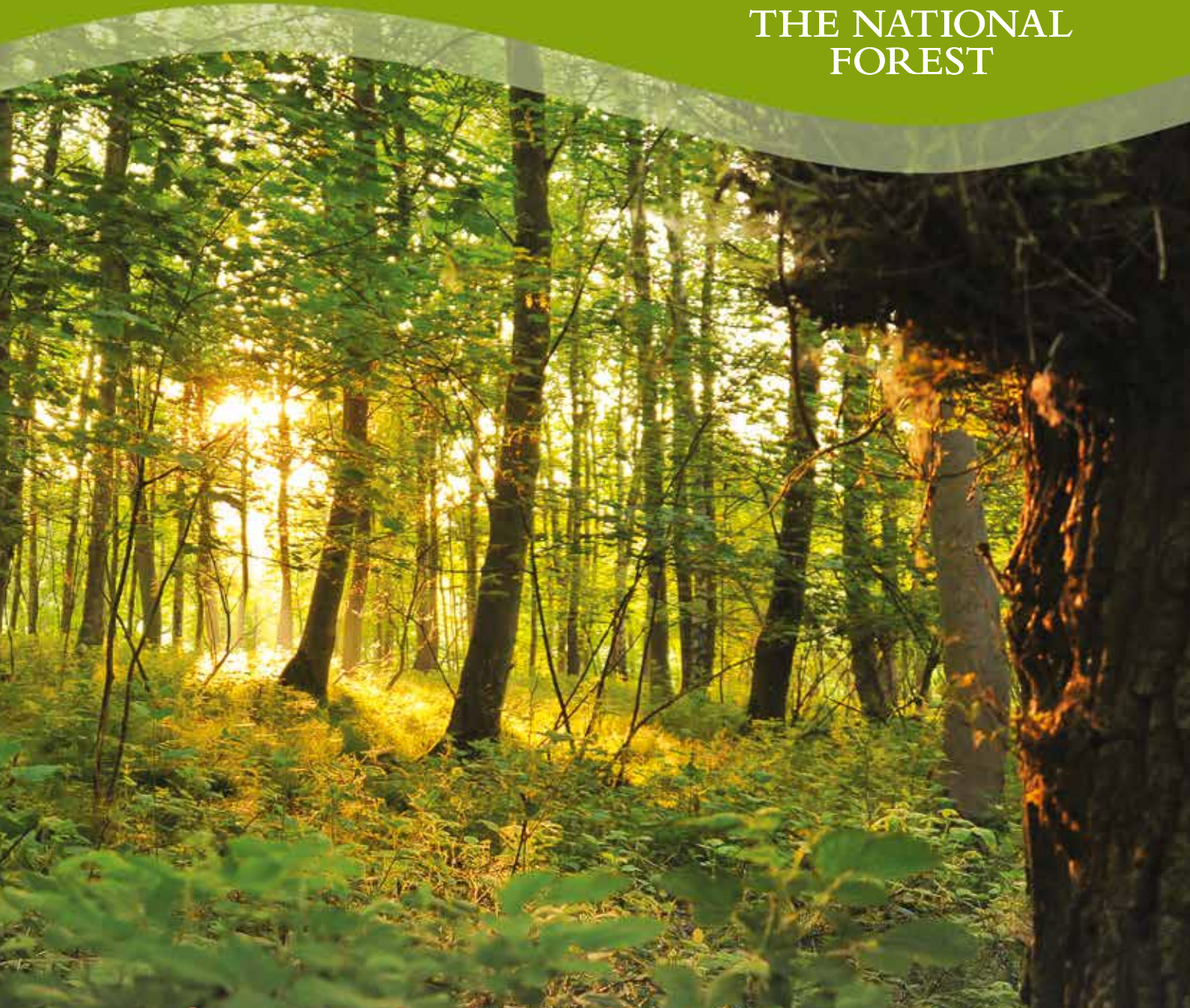
We need to engage more with the Saudis, not only to reassure them, but to listen to them. They have legitimate interests and it is hard to argue that we got it right and they got it wrong over Iraq. We have shared interests in engaging with Iran to see if there is scope to reduce tensions in the region. If in Syria we don't have an immediate alternative to Assad and Islamic State, then there will have to be some sort of transitional political agreement among the main regional powers who have a stake in all this, and that will be hard to do without Iranian cooperation.

If you put all this together, it is not to imply that there is a huge risk of the House of Saud falling. There isn't. But given the huge downside risk (imagine, from our point of view, the current Middle East without a stable Saudi Arabia), the external pressures from low oil prices and regional unrest, this is not a time to be distancing ourselves from our traditional ally. We should intensify our engagement, and yes, we can raise the issue of human rights as candid friends, but we should also take the long view on issues of reform. **P**





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# His master's voice

A political speechwriter has to be comfortable with insincerity

BARTON SWAIM

**As the United States presidential election hots up, the candidates' speechwriters will be working overtime. Here, Barton Swaim describes his stint as a supplier of "language" to Mark Sanford, the Governor of South Carolina. Often, he writes, "it was impossible to sound sincere."**

I first met the Governor in his office with Rick, his Chief of Staff. I introduced myself; he said, "A pleasure"; and we sat down. For a few long seconds he said nothing. Then it seemed he wanted to speak. His mouth formed a circle, as if whatever he wanted to say began with a w.

"Wwww," he said, staring upward. Then he fixed his eyes on Rick. "Wwwwha."

Rick seemed ready to interject, but at last the Governor said, "Www. What are we doing here?"

Rick introduced me. "He's here to talk about joining us in the press office. He's a writer."

"Oh, the writer." Now engaged, the Governor looked at me and asked if I knew some name or other. I said I didn't. He said this guy had had the job before me, that he'd been a writer at the *State* (a newspaper published in Columbia, South Carolina). He was a good guy. But he'd had to tell him it wasn't working out and he needed to find something else. The Governor hadn't kicked him out on to the streets, he said, just told him he needed to find something else. "He couldn't find my voice."

The Governor was "very interested in this larger idea of a brand," he said. Every written product with his name on it had to be in the same style and have the same "cadence"; people should be able to read it and know it was his, whether or not they agreed with it. He mentioned the name of a famous politician and the name of his speechwriter. "Every speech he gives, every op-ed or whatever, sounds the same. Not the same, like boring the same. From the same source, consistent. I like that. It's about consistency. You always know what you're getting."

I said consistency was a good thing in a politician. It suggested reliability. I thought I'd blundered in using the word politician, but he said, "Reliability. That's a good word for it."

He had seen some articles and reviews I'd written and conceded I must be "erudite" but wondered whether I could write in a way that "the mechanic in Greenwood can understand." (Greenwood is a small town in the western part of the state). He told me to "take a stab" at an op-ed on the folly of carving out special tax breaks for "green energy" companies or something like that and get it to Rick by the next morning.

A few days later the Governor called me. He said something about pay, but so shocked and flattered was I by receiving a call from a sitting Governor that I couldn't gather my thoughts sufficiently to negotiate a salary. When I hung up the phone, I was very pleased with myself.

When I started working for the Governor, I didn't do any writing for a week or two. Mainly I just sat behind my desk trying to look busy. At some point the Press Secretary, Aaron, told me to read through the "op-ed book." This was a giant three-ring binder of photocopies of the Governor's published writing over the first four years of his administration. (His second term had begun just a month or two earlier). Reading the op-ed book would help me get used to the Governor's "voice," Aaron told me.

I spent a few hours reading these pieces. It worried me that I didn't hear much of a voice. What I heard was more like a cough. Or the humming of a bad melody, with most of the notes sharp. One sentence stands out in my memory: "This is important not only because I think it ought to be a first order of business, but because it makes common sense."

At that time there were four of us in the press shop or, to speak more correctly, the communications office. Aaron sat at the big desk. He had been a reporter for one of the regional papers during the boss's first run for Governor. He had asked the candidate relentlessly difficult questions and seemed to enjoy it. Aaron's fearlessness, together with his smoking habit, love of rap music, slovenly attire, and youth—he was only 25 during that first campaign—all suggested the kind of scorch-and-burn libertarianism that became the Governor's brand. The Governor-elect (as he became in the fall of 2002) hired Aaron as a speechwriter. That didn't go well. One of Aaron's first contributions was to insert into one of the Governor's speeches a glowing reference to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, an allusion that enraged the State's considerable Armenian population. Aaron was far better at talking than writing, and by the time I came on he was the Governor's spokesman. He enjoyed arguing for its own sake and did it with a weird combination of conviction and phlegmatic composure. He would get into heated exchanges with other staffers over policy issues, and the whole time his eyes would stay half closed, as if he found the conversation slightly disappointing. Sometimes he would contend with reporters over the phone, the receiver clutched between his head and shoulder, and play video games at the same time. Aaron couldn't be shaken or hurt; he could endure the Governor's cruellest and most irrational criticisms as if he'd barely heard them.

There were three other guys in the press office: me, Nat and an alternating member, which at that time was Mack. Mack was from the Department of Commerce, a cabinet agency. Commerce was on the 15th floor of a sleek downtown building adjacent to the State House. The Governor had "borrowed" him from Commerce, which was his way of keeping operating costs for the

*Barton Swaim is a writer and native of South Carolina. From "The Speechwriter: A Brief Education in Politics" by Barton Swaim. Copyright © 2015 by Barton Swaim. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc*



office at about half of what it had been under the previous governor. Mack, who was from Nebraska or one of the Dakotas, seemed angry about being moved from the crisp, spacious offices of the Commerce Department to the Governor's cluttered press office. He generally sat with his face sullenly fixed on his computer screen. I believe he had made the understandable but fatal error of interpreting the Governor's criticisms of his writing as

## **“It worried me that I didn’t hear a voice. What I heard was more like a cough or the humming of a bad melody”**

personal animus. Anyhow he moved on a few months later, and a myth grew up that he had been on the verge of killing someone.

Nat was a Michigander who had found himself in the south through some complicated set of circumstances involving a scholarship. He had a wife and two daughters, as I did, but a fiercer drive to succeed. Nat would usually arrive earlier and stay later than I did, and he was naturally inclined to become more emotionally invested in performing his job well than was healthy. There was a certain dry midwestern intensity about Nat: he laughed without smiling and always seemed to know something you didn't. Later the Governor would put him in charge of operations, which meant he was always telling you to do something the Governor wanted you to do. He seemed uncomfortable giving direct orders, perhaps because this was the south and southerners don't always say things directly. So he would tell you to do things in awkwardly courteous ways.

“Barton,” he might say, trying hard to sound relaxed and friendly, “uh, two questions for you. One, how's your family?”

“They're fine,” I would say. “What's the second thing?”

The second thing would of course be the command, which Nat always put in the form of a question: “The Hibernian Society dinner is next month. Could you draft a few toasts for the Governor?”

The Governor had just won re-election to a second four-year term. He had routed his opponent, a gigantic man with an oafish grin who had criticised the Governor for failing to “get things done.” There was an element of truth in that criticism. The joke about the Governor was that he didn't play well with others. Most of the state's legislators hated him; they overrode his vetoes by huge margins. The contrast between him and them was extreme. They spoke with heavy accents; he spoke with a relaxed, somehow aristocratic lilt. They came across as warm and jolly; he was charming but aloof. They were mostly overweight, a few severely so, and physically unprepossessing; he was thin, six feet tall, with deer-like features and sad eyes. They had wives back home and, in many cases, girlfriends in the capital; the Governor's wife had a natural, unflashy beauty, and their four well-adjusted young sons lent the family an appearance of decency and strength other politicians long for. The legislators had little regard for ideological differences; apart from the Rs and Ds after their names, their voting patterns were largely indistinguishable; the majority party exercised near total control of the legislature, and the opposition offered only an occasional squeak in protest, so desperate were its members ▶



to hold on to what power and prestige they had. The Governor, by contrast, spoke endlessly about ideological differences; again and again he denounced the majority party's—his own party's—reluctance to act on its supposed principles. Their staffers wore seersucker suits with pastel bow ties in the summer and high-quality wool suits the rest of the year; they drove gigantic SUVs and paid for them with six-figure salaries.

The Governor's staffers were paid little and looked it. Members of the General Assembly enjoyed the perquisites of office and the visible trappings of authority: the catered banquets, the special car tags, the fawning female lobbyists. The tags on the first family's cars were the ordinary ones, and when the Governor went to a catered banquet, you'd see him putting boiled shrimp or a couple of deviled eggs into a napkin and stuffing it into his jacket pocket so he wouldn't have to buy dinner on the way home. They named roads and interchanges after themselves; one of the main routes from the capital to the coast, for example, reads like a roll call in the Senate. There were never any plans to name anything after the Governor.

The Governor was famous for his frugality; it was part of the brand. His father, though well off by most standards—he was a heart surgeon in the state's Low country—had prevented his children from enjoying much in the way of luxury. The Governor had inherited some wealth, and he'd had a post-collegiate stint at Goldman Sachs and learned to make a good deal more (how I'm not sure). But he inherited his father's parsimonious ways. There were legends about how he had slept on a futon during his days in Congress (he had won his first election in 1994 and served three terms) in order to return his housing allowance to the US Treasury; about how, despite the millions he made in real estate, he had driven the same old Honda for years. In politics,

## “Once the Governor was comfortable with a certain way of stating a position, that became our ‘language’”

legends are always just legends, and enterprising reporters were always trying to upend those of the Governor's frugality. But these attempts usually ended up reinforcing as much of the legend as they contradicted. He hadn't slept on a futon every night, a reporter discovered; often he slept in a Georgetown apartment owned by a friend. But this only emphasised the fact that he had in fact slept on a futon in his office.

The remarkable thing about his reputation for cheapness is that it was true. Most of his clothing was in a deplorable state. He would not consent to have it dry-cleaned; his staff, and his wife, would occasionally have his shirts and trousers cleaned without his knowledge. He wore only one coat, a navy blazer with one or two missing sleeve buttons, and one pair of trousers, charcoal grey. Both had so many stains that, had they been of a lighter colour, their filth would have been revolting. Once I saw inside the collar of one of his white button-up shirts; it was solid brown. Another time he wore the same white shirt, an ink stain on the sleeve, for almost two weeks straight.

The Governor's neurotic cheapness had bigger consequences. One was that most of the staff were under 30 years old. He wanted a tiny staff, paid poorly and prepared to work long hours, which in practice meant young people, mostly unmarried. Some-

times it seemed like a band of kids were in charge of the state. Once, when some of the senior staff were absent, Rick, the Chief of Staff, remarked that it looked like “Bring Your Kids to Work Day, only without the parents.” Another consequence was that you knew you could be let go. It wasn't a typical government job in which you could get lost in the process. There were only about 25 of us in the office—half the size of administrations in other small states—and poor performance was obvious to everybody. There was nowhere to hide, no way to settle at the bottom. This was probably a good thing in most respects, but there was something indecent in the way some of us strove, like prisoners in a gulag, to become useful to the master.

I began to think this way after just a few weeks. A month or two in, there were signs that I might not be the writer the Governor wanted. Almost certainly wasn't. He hadn't liked any of my op-eds. During those first few months Laura, my wife, told me several times that I needed to start writing badly—badly like him, with clumsy, meandering sentences and openings that seemed calculated to make you stop reading. But I couldn't bring myself to try it.

I don't claim that my writing was brilliant, but the objections he raised were mystifying to me and sometimes totally unreasonable. He would quibble with a harmless phrase and, instead of saying simply that he didn't like it and having me change it or changing it himself, he would fulminate about it and rewrite the entire piece in a fit of irritation. It was almost as if he was afraid that if somebody started writing precisely what he wanted, he'd have no control over what was written. Expressing constant dissatisfaction was perhaps his way of maintaining control. Once, he stormed into the press office, paper in hand, incensed that I had written the words “towns of Lee County.” He thought it should have been “towns in Lee County.” He walked around to various offices—legislative, policy, law—asking staffers if they thought it sounded right to say “towns of” or “towns in” Lee County.

I tried writing some letters for him. This seemed to go slightly, though only slightly, better.

Every great politician has a special discipline, and the Governor's was letter writing. The rule was, if anybody said anything favourable about him in the press or anywhere else, that person would get a personal letter from the Governor. Not a form letter: the words had to make it clear that this letter was to this person for this reason. The press office was also tasked with drafting “happy letters”—letters to people who had done something heroic, received awards, or done or achieved something otherwise noteworthy.

One of the first happy letters I wrote was to a soldier who had been awarded a Purple Heart. I drafted a letter of moderate length written in an informal style with modestly stately diction: not flowery but sufficiently laudatory. I showed him the letter.

“Again,” he said, gesturing in a way that signified dissatisfaction. “What did this guy do to get a Purple Heart?”

“He defused roadside bombs.”

“I need—you know—something thoughtful, something moving. Just give me something else.”

There were several more exchanges between the Governor and me over this letter, and they all went about the same way. At last he approved a draft, making only one change. I had written, “the fact that you've risked your life for your country”; he altered it to “risked your life in the service of national duty.” ▶

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It's impossible to attain much success in politics if you're the sort of person who can't abide disingenuousness. This isn't to say politics is full of lies and liars; it has no more liars than other fields do. Actually one hears very few proper lies in politics. Using vague, slippery, or just meaningless language is not the same as lying: it's not intended to deceive so much as to preserve options, buy time, distance oneself from others, or just to sound like you're saying something instead of nothing.

Sometimes, for instance, there would be a matter the Governor didn't want to discuss in public, but we knew he'd be asked about it at his next public appearance, or in any case Aaron would be asked about it. Let's say the head of a cabinet agency had been accused by a state senator of running a cockfighting ring. His behaviour would fall within executive purview, but since he had not been indicted or even legally accused, he couldn't be fired or forced to resign. Aaron knew the Governor would be asked about it at a press conference, so our office would issue a statement to any member of the press who asked about it. "[The Senator's] remarks have raised some troubling questions," the statement might say, "and we're looking closely at the situation in an effort to determine whether it merits further investigation by state or local law enforcement. At the same time, we want to avoid rushing to judgement, and we hope all concerned will likewise avoid making accusations in the absence of evidence." This is the kind of statement Aaron would need: one that said something without saying anything. It would get the Governor on record without committing him to any course of action. Hence the rhetorical dead weight: "state or local law enforcement" instead of just "law enforcement"; all that about "rushing to judgement" and "making accusations in the absence of evidence," as if anybody needed to be told that. If a reporter asked the Governor about it, he could avoid talking about it without having to use that self-incriminating phrase "No comment." "I'd go back to what we've already said on this," he might say, and repeat the gaseous phrases of the statement.

Many people take this as evidence of duplicity or cynicism. But they don't know what it's like to be expected to make comments, almost every working day, on things of which they have little or no reliable knowledge or about which they just don't care. They don't appreciate the sheer number of things on which a politician is expected to have a position. Issues on which the Governor had no strong opinions, events over which he had no control, situations on which it served no useful purpose for him to comment—all required some kind of remark from our office.

On a typical day Aaron might be asked to comment on the indictment of a local school board chairman, the ongoing drought in the Upstate, a dispute between a power company and the state's environmental regulatory agency and a study concluding that some supposedly crucial state agency had been underfunded for a decade. Then there were the things the Governor actually cared about: a senate committee's passage of a bill on land use, a decision by the State Supreme Court on legislation applying to only one county, a public university's decision to raise tuition by 12 per cent. Commenting on that many things is unnatural, and sometimes it was impossible to sound sincere. There was no way around it, though. Journalists would ask our office about anything having remotely to do with the Governor's sphere of authority, and you could give only so many minimalist responses before you began to sound disengaged or ignorant or

dishonest. And the necessity of having to manufacture so many views on so many subjects, day after day, fosters a sense that you don't have to believe your own words. You get comfortable with insincerity. It affected all of us, not just the boss. Sometimes I felt no more attachment to the words I was writing than a dog has to its vomit.

It was our job to generate supplies of "language." Once the Governor was comfortable with a certain argument or a certain way of stating a position, that became our "language." Language fell under the press office's purview. "Do we have anything on the cigarette tax?" someone from the policy office would ask. "Yeah, we've got language on that." Every week, sometimes every day, some new dispute would have all the attention—tax incentives for corporate retailers, exorbitant tuition hikes at public universities, a bill forcing businesses to verify the immigration status of all their employees—and language was needed for each one. Sometimes you got the feeling that all these fights over policies didn't amount to much more than a lot of words. It was Foucault who held that political power structures were really just a matter of "competing discourses." There's something to that idea, only in my experience nobody controlled anything, and certainly not discourse. Nobody ever won. It felt like a long pitched battle in which there were no victors and only occasional casualties.

Once, when the Governor had angered the public education establishment over a funding issue, the office received a barrage of calls chastising him for his "arrogance." Almost all the callers, we began to notice, used that word. Then we realised that most of them were just reading a statement given to them by some advocacy group. I was sitting next to June, the Deputy Chief of Staff, when she took one of these calls. She had heard the statement recited many times already and knew it ended with the words "Please tell the Governor to stop his political posturing. We, the voters, are watching." Evidently this caller had stumbled over the phrase "political posturing" and lost her place in the script. So June helpfully added, "You, the voters, are watching?"

"Yes," the caller said.

"Thank you, ma'am," June answered, chewing gum and playing Brick Breaker on her computer. "I'll pass along your message to the Governor." ■



*"Now be honest— isn't this way more fun than the old-fashioned corporate ladder?"*



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## Arts & books

Thatcher's peak **Jesse Norman** 68  
 Ben Bernanke got it right **Mervyn King** 71  
 John le Carré's secret **Jay Elwes** 72  
 Mary Beard salutes the Romans **Edith Hall** 76  
 Books in brief 80

# Mistress of all she surveyed

Margaret Thatcher's triumphant second term sowed the seeds of her downfall, says *Jesse Norman*

### Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography, Volume Two: Everything She Wants

by Charles Moore (Allen Lane, £30)

In 1982 Margaret Thatcher led a British delegation to Beijing to discuss the vexed question of Hong Kong. They were given second-rate accommodation, and most of the Chinese leadership deliberately stayed away from the British banquet at the Great Hall of the People. But matters really hit rock bottom back at the hotel when Denis Thatcher discovered that he could not obtain a gin and tonic, a point on which he was vociferously indignant to his wife in the privacy of their bedroom. The eavesdroppers took the hint; both gin and tonic were then supplied.

To read this book is to find oneself in something of the same position as the Chinese eavesdroppers. For as with the first volume of his superb biography, such is the depth of Charles Moore's research—he interviewed 286 people for the book, some more than once—that he is able to move the reader effortlessly from front of house to behind the scenes and back again. The political and the personal are juxtaposed, and the result illuminates even the most familiar episodes of an already well-researched period.

The result is a book almost every one of whose 821 pages is absorbing. The style is clear and incisive, the viewpoint sympathetic, nuanced and dispassionate; all qualities which give additional weight even to Moore's most trenchant judgements. And the footnotes, in which much of the most gossipy and revealing material has been placed, are worth studying in their own right.

Beginning with the Hong Kong negotiations, this second volume takes us from the aftermath of the Falklands War until the general election of 1987. It is a period packed with incident and drama, among which the miners' strike and the IRA's Brighton bomb of 1984 (which killed five people and nearly took Thatcher's life) stand out.

Moore describes these events with great skill. But he does not neglect a host of other matters that challenged Thatcher and her government. Some, such as Star Wars, the

proposed defence system designed to protect the United States from strategic nuclear weapons, and the European Exchange Rate Mechanism, were very big indeed, and obviously so at the time. Others, such as her wooing of Mikhail Gorbachev or the travails of the Westland helicopter company, would prove to be unexpectedly consequential. Still others—the Cecil Parkinson affair and

**“Attempts were made from time to time to soften her and her image, all of which she rejected as inauthentic”**

Oxford University's refusal of an honorary degree come to mind—affected her personally in different and sometimes long-term ways.

Nor does he neglect her failures. Thatcher was bamboozled over Europe, struggled with local government and—as is sometimes forgotten—failed to make headway on public spending. As Moore records, “little serious attempt was made to reform and reduce spending on social programmes. Public spending, as a whole, was never cut.”

But what also comes through vividly is the highly conflicted nature of the times themselves. To an extent hard to recognise now, Britain in the 1970s and 80s was beset by hatreds—of class, of income, of religion, of race—made worse by unemployment, economic malaise, loss of international standing and a wider sense of powerlessness. These hatreds were reflected in the media, and to some extent fomented by them, including by the BBC. (Indeed the BBC notoriously spiked *The Falklands Play* by Ian Curteis, which depicted Thatcher as a heroine; overall, Moore records, it ran seven dramas that were critical of the Falklands War, and none that were favourable to it. Little wonder she disliked it). Thatcher is often criticised as a divisive figure, and various attempts were made at the time to soften her and her image, all of which she rejected as inauthentic. But

from British Leyland to cruise missiles to South African sanctions, the times themselves were no less divisive. What the country desperately needed was leadership, and leadership—of a very particular kind—was what she gave them.

Given the amount and quality of his material, it is understandable that the author has reverted to his original plan of a three-volume work. But this also has the important effect of casting light forward to the final act. There is a sense of lurking tragedy as the narrative unfolds. The heroic central figure, the struggle, the great achievements, the fatal weakness, the iron logic of events are all here. The excitement builds inexorably and, though the final downfall is deferred, we know how it will end.

There can be no doubt over the pre-eminence of the central figure. During this period Thatcher was dominant in domestic politics. But by 1983, after the Falklands, she was also the senior figure among world leaders. Indeed she stood at—and sometimes, fought her way to—the centre of almost every major issue affecting the western alliance. The exception was the US invasion of Grenada, a former British colony, on which President Ronald Reagan deliberately blindsided her. “Susceptible to charming, well-dressed men who flattered her,” Moore notes, “[she] was as disappointed as an ex-girlfriend.”

Depending on your viewpoint, the Iron Lady of caricature was forceful or domineering, independent-minded or arrogant, personally professional or cold, crisp or obsessive on detail. There is no lack of evidence here for those wishing to feed these stereotypes. But the book adds to the vastly more subtle picture already assembled in Moore's first volume. It reminds us that Thatcher was unwilling to take decisions on occasion, especially in the removal of colleagues—be it Cecil Parkinson, whom she greatly liked, or Michael Heseltine, whom she did not.

She could be cunning, and indeed underhand, notably over the ailing Westland public company. Her courage gave a paradoxical quality to some of her actions; she vigorously opposed sanctions on South Africa, yet was ►



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Margaret Thatcher celebrates the opening of the M25 London orbital in October 1986

the first British Prime Minister to request the release of Nelson Mandela. She was “passionately interested in ideas,” loved poetry and was by no means uninterested in the arts, though her tastes were conventional. And she remained gloriously unworldly. When *Private Eye* alleged (quite falsely) that Sarah Keays had “recently returned from exploring the jungles of Uganda”—a long-running euphemism for having sex—with Marcus Fox MP, Thatcher roundly informed ministers that it couldn’t be true: “Marcus tells me he’s never visited Africa.”

Yet despite her dominance, despite her personal conviction, Thatcher retained a sense of wariness, even insecurity. This was not, in general, the result of public criticism. One of the most gripping chapters in the book surveys the response of many British intellectuals to her. Their language was not that of party-political hostility, but of utter hatred and even horror of defilement, in which it is hard not to see a degree of misogyny. She was “loathsome, repulsive in almost every way” in the words of Jonathan Miller.

John Vincent, a rare academic supporter, summed the reaction up brilliantly: “Mrs Thatcher is the point at which all snobberies meet: intellectual snobbery, social snobbery, the snobbery of Brooks’s, the snobbery about scientists among those educated in the arts, the snobbery of the metropolis about the provincial, the snobbery of the south about the north, and the snobbery of men about career women.” As Moore notes, these views were not shared by many intellectuals who had direct experience of tyranny. Men like Andrei Sakharov and Vladimir Bukovsky greatly admired her strength and her love of liberty.

No, Thatcher’s wariness derived from a sense of political fragility. She had been patronised and underestimated by Tory gran-

dees all the way up the political ladder, and she had been instrumental in the assassination of a party leader herself with Ted Heath’s defenestration in 1975. So she knew how quickly it could happen. Her views of her colleagues were astringent, indeed often hostile at the best of times and any sign of challenge made her bristle, as Norman Tebbit, Geoffrey Howe, Douglas Hurd and Michael Heseltine all discovered. Combined with her sheer longevity, and her extraordinarily punishing workload, the effect over time was to make her more suspicious, more insular, more reliant on a kitchen cabinet, cutting her off from independent advice and information that might have saved her at the end.

All these factors played a role in the episode that is the unexpected climax of this book: the Westland affair. As Moore notes, it

**“Yet despite her dominance, despite her personal conviction, Thatcher retained a sense of wariness”**

remains something of a mystery how a dispute over a small helicopter company could have brought a government with a majority of 140 almost to its knees. On the surface, that dispute concerned the ownership of a defence contractor, the merits of an American or European “solution” and the wider issue of the proper scope of industrial policy. But in fact the underlying cause was simple: a titanic clash of wills between Heseltine and Thatcher.

As that clash became more public, so did the determination on each side to give no quarter. Heseltine’s desire to move to the

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) had been ignored in the 1985 Cabinet reshuffle, and he felt marooned at the Ministry of Defence. He threw enormous energy into shaping a European contractors’ bid for the ailing Westland, a public company about to announce huge losses. The Prime Minister opposed this on the grounds that it would reduce competition but not the requirement for state subsidy; instead she preferred a bid by Sikorsky of the US. The need for speed, given that a formal City takeover bid timetable was in operation, raised the pressure.

Originally No 10 had wanted the DTI under Leon Brittan to lead on the issue, but as Heseltine raised the stakes No 10 soon took control, with Thatcher’s adviser Charles Powell in the lead. Two ministerial meetings showed the Prime Minister in a majority but were ultimately inconclusive, as was a Cabinet meeting in which Heseltine’s attempt to raise the issue appears to have been ruled out of order. Thatcher contemplated sacking Heseltine and other means to enforce her will via the invocation of collective discipline, but backed off. However, she was incensed by a letter from Patrick Mayhew, the Solicitor General, warning that the government could not withhold relevant information, including information which would almost certainly help the European bid.

It was in this context that a further confidential letter from Mayhew was leaked. Based in part on new evidence from Colette Bowe, then the press officer involved, Moore describes how No 10 and indeed Thatcher herself were complicit in the leak. She demanded that the letter should be written, No 10 gave clearance to Bowe, and it pronounced its satisfaction afterwards. As Powell put it, “Heseltine tried to deploy the Law Officers and got it right back between the eyes.” Heseltine then resigned at a stormy Cabinet meeting, the civil service leak inquiry was unable to pin down the truth, a Parliamentary Committee was prevented from questioning the key official witnesses, Neil Kinnock failed to score an open goal in the Commons and Leon Brittan resigned, in part to protect the Prime Minister.

It is a deeply revealing and inglorious episode in modern government. Moore’s verdict is damning: “[Thatcher] described Westland as ‘a crisis created from a small issue by a giant ego’, but she never examined what she—also the possessor of a giant ego—had done or failed to do... If the committee had known and published what really happened... it is hard to see how Mrs Thatcher would have been able to remain in office.” After Westland, there was a further restriction in the trust and openness around the Prime Minister—a “hardening of the arteries.” The stage was being set for the final act.

*Jesse Norman MP’s Everyman Anthology of Edmund Burke has just been published*



**Enemies within: Thatcher with her rivals Michael Heseltine and John Major**

# The Buddha of banking

Ben Bernanke was the right man for a crisis but Lehman was always doomed, says *Mervyn King*



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Central bank governors at the US Treasury in 2008. L-R: Masaaki Shirakawa of Japan, Ben Bernanke of the United States, Jean-Claude Trichet of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi of Italy and Mervyn King of the UK

## The Courage to Act: A Memoir of a Crisis and Its Aftermath

by Ben Bernanke (Norton, £22.99)

Of the many accounts of the financial crisis of 2007-09, this is by far the longest, best and most detailed from an American policy-maker at the centre of the earthquake. Unlike many instant memoirs, it will be of great use to future historians and scholars. Ben Bernanke was Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board through the crisis and its aftermath, leaving office in early 2014. His book is written in a straightforward style that reflects his ability to explain complex events in a way that is easy to follow. There are no fireworks nor unexpected revelations, but that is not Bernanke's style. More importantly, it is an honest account.

Bernanke writes well and movingly about his upbringing in Dillon, South Carolina, his Jewish family and his passage from academic life to the international financial stage. As an academic, Bernanke carried out important and insightful research into the role of credit in shaping the ups and downs of the business cycle, and became an expert on the history of the Great Depression and the wave of bank failures that were one of its principal causes.

Before the crisis, Bernanke set out to

create a more consensual style and atmosphere on the Federal Open Market Committee (the FOMC, the US equivalent of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee). He changed the procedures of its meetings to emphasise the collaborative nature of their discussions. Much of this quiet work bore fruit in the deliberations of the FOMC, although once the crisis hit Bernanke found it no easier than any other central bank governor to persuade a personality-conscious media that decisions were taken collectively. His major achievement in the field of monetary policy was, at long last, to convince his colleagues that the Fed should, in effect, adopt an inflation target of 2 per cent (the same as other major central banks). But it took him until 2012 to get there.

Our two careers intersected at several points—at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the early 1980s, when we shared adjoining offices; in the 1990s when Bernanke, as an academic, and I, at the Bank of England, were promoting the cause of inflation targeting; and again in the 2000s on the international central banking circuit when we became colleagues as governors of our respective central banks. But only when reading this memoir did I realise that his freshman year at Harvard was my first year

there as a graduate student. On his arrival at Harvard from Dillon, Bernanke found his new roommates in the Yard to be a football player, a Vietnam veteran and a maths prodigy. To be at Harvard was a liberating and formative experience for him. I lived in a wooden house, unable to sleep because of the noise of the cicadas and the fire engines, and was taken aback by the tear gas used to break up anti-Vietnam war protests in Harvard Square. We never met then, but if we had I am sure he would have tried everything to make me a baseball fan.

After an illustrious career in academia, Bernanke became a governor of the Fed in 2002, and Chairman in 2006 after the retirement of Alan Greenspan. When the earthquake hit in 2007 he was the right man in the right place. America was fortunate to have a team of determined and highly capable people handling the challenges thrown up by unfolding events. Hank Paulson at the Treasury, Ben Bernanke at the Fed in Washington and Timothy Geithner at the New York Fed, ably supported by those under them, worked long and hard. They complemented each other. Paulson was bold and incisive, Bernanke thoughtful and patient and Geithner imaginative and politically astute. Bernanke proved to be innovative in devising solu- ▶

tions and extraordinarily persistent. Geithner described him as “the Buddha of central banking.” The phrase captures Bernanke’s serene, often silent, manner in dealing with the most fraught problems. On the international scene, he was cooperative and helpful, although not a forceful leader. His book reveals that beneath that calm exterior was someone who was angry at much of the behaviour in the banking sector, and with a strong determination to prevent any repetition of the Great Depression. Given the hours that he put in, and the many absences from his family, it is perhaps not surprising that Bernanke’s title was chosen, he says, by his wife. It is probably the most controversial aspect of the book, and a hostage to fortune. As the title of a biography of Bernanke, *The Courage to Act* would have been highly appropriate because, in the face of much opposition from Congress and elsewhere, he did indeed have the courage to act. But there are some things best left to others to say.

By far the largest part of Bernanke’s book concerns the efforts he and his colleagues made to fight the fire that broke out initially in 2007 and then flared up to a conflagration in 2008. It is a detailed account and although it does not differ significantly from the memoirs already published by Geithner and Paulson, there are subtle differences of interpretation and nuance. For British readers, the most interesting episode is the weekend immediately prior to the failure of Lehman Brothers in September 2008. Even in Bernanke’s even-handed description of the events over that weekend, there is the impression that at least some of his colleagues had a lingering feeling that if only Britain had been willing to underwrite the losses of Lehman and allow Barclays to purchase the firm then all would have been well. This overlooks two points. The first is that it would have been extraordinarily difficult for Gordon Brown or Alistair Darling to go to the House of Commons and say, “I want to report today that we have put at risk tens of billions of pounds of British taxpayers’ money to save an American bank because our friends across the

Atlantic did not have the courage to act.” Since Barclays was able to buy Lehman at a much lower price only a few days later, the risks were real. As Bernanke writes, “the company and its critics profoundly disagreed on the value of its complex investments” and “as Saturday wore on, it became evident that Lehman was deeply insolvent.” The US authorities did not feel they should prop up an insolvent bank, and chose not to nationalise it. It should have been no surprise that the UK was unwilling to step into the breach.

The second consideration is that saving Lehman would not have saved the system.

### “Beneath that calm exterior was someone who was angry at much of the behaviour of the banking sector”

Other institutions were in trouble. Across the industrialised world, the major banks were so thinly capitalised that any small disturbance was capable of bringing the system down. The failure of Lehman did not come out of the blue, nor was it the last bank to fail.

The final section of the book describes the efforts, still continuing, of the Fed to generate a lasting economic recovery in the US. When dealing with events after the immediate crisis had passed in the spring of 2009, a more defensive tone surprisingly sets in. I suspect this reflects not criticism of the actions taken by the Fed and other central banks to prevent a catastrophic collapse of the money supply, and so a possible repetition of the Great Depression, but criticism from Congress about the Fed having overstepped its powers during the crisis. On more than one occasion my US colleagues would bemoan the lack of a parliamentary system in which quick decisions could be made and where the government takes responsibility for the use of public funds.

At the end of what is a long book (over 600 pages), one is left with a sense that a

larger proportion could have been devoted not to fire-fighting but to the prevention of future fires. The UK was the first country to announce a recapitalisation of its banking system, and academics have since taken up the cause of higher capital requirements for banks. For my taste, Bernanke is perhaps a little too sympathetic to the standard macroeconomic models which are still at the centre of the analysis of central banks, and too uncritical of the doctrine of the “lender of last resort” to a banking system very different from that which existed when Walter Bagehot wrote *Lombard Street* in 1873.

When historians come to analyse and review the history of the crisis in 2008, its origins, the way it played out, and the new world to which the crisis led, what will they make of the many memoirs that have now appeared? The recollection of the participants in combat are rarely completely consistent, not least because they were fighting on different parts of the battlefield. Inevitably, an episode in which one participant played only a small part receives little emphasis, even though it may have been decisive in the outcome of the war. Events in which the participant was a central figure receive an exaggerated importance. The only answer to this bias in reporting lies in the careful sifting of evidence of historians when all the official material is available, not only memoirs but papers and documents of a wide range of participants from all sides of the conflict. It is no accident that some of the most informative and entertaining history is produced many years after the events which are described.

Bernanke’s memoir is a crucial document of record that will be invaluable to future historians. As far as any memoir can be, it is an honest and accurate account. There is no hubris nor exaggeration: simply a telling of the tale of the most dramatic period in office of any Fed Chairman to date. In due course historians are likely to provide us all with a subtle evaluation.

*Mervyn King is a former Governor of the Bank of England. His book “The End of Alchemy” (Norton) will be published in March*

## The value of deception

A rackets childhood taught John le Carré to master both spying and writing, argues *Jay Elwes*

**John le Carré: The Biography**  
by Adam Sisman (Bloomsbury, £25)

After the Berlin wall came down, interviewers began to ask John le Carré whether the end of the Soviet Union had robbed him of his subject matter. The question irritated him, because it implied he was only capable of producing spy thrillers, derivative novels

little better than police procedurals.

But his questioners had a point. The novels le Carré wrote in the 1990s were not his best. His Cold War writing had been charged with the urgent paranoia of the time, and by the lingering suspicion that the black and white opposition of east versus west was in fact a much greyer affair. Le Carré’s exploration of this moral landscape was perhaps his

greatest achievement, but when the nuances of the Cold War vanished, it led to a corresponding loss of nuance in his writing.

Le Carré’s summary of the Cold War—“the right people lost but the wrong people won”—is a nice line and one that seems to have led him to the conclusion that, with the Soviets gone, the real enemy now was corporate culture and by association the ▶

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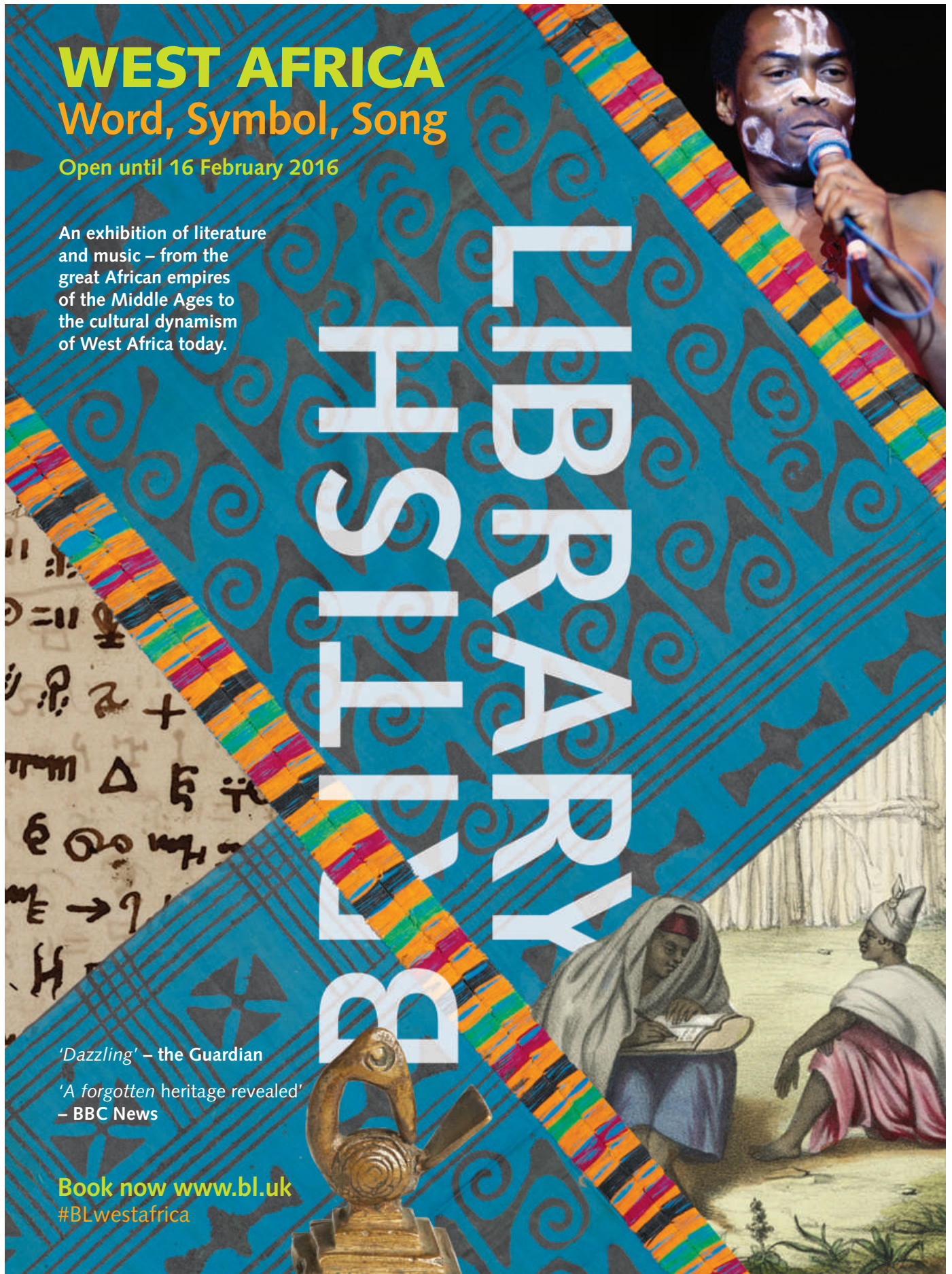
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United States. In the books of the late-1990s and early-2000s—*The Tailor of Panama*, *The Constant Gardener*, *Absolute Friends*, *A Most Wanted Man*—the earlier subtleties fell away. The US and big business were repeatedly portrayed as sinister and a new shrill tone emerged that diminished his writing.

Yet his choice of subject matter could be startlingly prescient. The publication of *Our Game* (1995), which dealt with separatists in the Caucasus, coincided with the climax of the first Chechen war. His most recent novel, *A Delicate Truth*, tells the story of a disillusioned civil servant who leaks a cache of government secrets. The book was published in April 2013, just a month before Edward Snowden, a former employee of the US National Security Agency, boarded a plane for Hong Kong.

The lesson of these later works was somewhat one-note: the west is decadent and dominated by malign interests and corporations; its apparent prosperity is based on the suffering of the developing world. But this analysis does not fit the economic facts. The world is becoming more economically equal, not less. Hundreds of millions of Indians, Chinese and Africans have been lifted out of poverty by adopting the economic attitudes that le Carré seems to deplore. Rather than pushing for global dominance, under President Barack Obama the US has retreated from the global stage, scalded by its experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is perhaps natural that le Carré should kick against orthodoxy. He was born in 1931 as David Cornwell. His father Ronnie was an irrepressible conman who scalped everyone he met. He talked numerous people out of their life savings, including the neighbours. A superficial charmer in public, Ronnie was a monster to his family. Coming home drunk he would barge into the boys' bedroom and fondle his sons. He was unfaithful to Olive, David's mother, and on one occasion forced her to accept another woman into their bed. It all proved too much. One night, Olive packed a bag and while her two sons slept, she left and never returned. David Cornwell grew up motherless. He would not see her again until he sought her out in his twenties.

Ronnie was a spinner of yarns. As Adam Sisman explains in this excellent biography, when Ronnie sent his boys to public school, they were forced to become storytellers, just like their "old man." At Sherborne, David quickly adopted the upper-middle class manners and appearance of the other pupils. Desperate to conceal his very different origins, he learned the value of invention and deception.

Aged 17, he took the surprising decision to attend the University of Berne, in Switzerland and as a young, broke, lone teenager he soon caught the attention of MI6. He did a few jobs for them—the details are vague. Later he went to Oxford and took a first in

modern languages. He joined MI5 and eventually MI6, and it was then that he started to write.

Success came to le Carré at striking speed. His third novel, *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* (1963) flew off the shelves. By February 1964, it was number one in America. He sold the film rights and Richard Burton, then one of the biggest movie stars in the world, was cast in the lead role. The money started to roll in. At this point, MI6 took him aside and it was agreed that he was too high profile to remain a spy.

Success caused le Carré two problems. The first was that having written a hit novel, he was under pressure to do so again. The second was that success, in the eyes of the literary world, was inherently suspect. If a

**“Le Carré draws his characters with all the detail and vividness of a man who has spent his professional life closely watching other people”**

writer sold too many books it was a sign that he was a bit downmarket—a *genre* writer.

Le Carré's writing shows little sign of being influenced by the literary experiments of the 20th century. There is no post-modernism apparent. He does not write about writing, or draw attention to the form in which he works: there is nothing self-referential in his novels. His style is direct, but at the same time immersive, which allows for the steady build-up of narrative pressure. As a result his books are very exciting—gripping, even. But who is to say that gripping and literary should be mutually exclusive? As the works of Raymond Chandler and former MI6 officer Graham Greene make clear, a book can have both qualities.

Le Carré draws his characters with all the detail and vividness of a man who has spent his professional life closely watching other people. His best creations are irresistible. You root for them. And in rooting for them, le Carré is able to make you feel acutely their moral contortions.

Like le Carré himself, his characters are loners. You are drawn to them. His stories are of men and women who are, for whatever reason, fighting alone. You join them. How could you not? And in this way, his appeal is ultimately psychological. On one level he offers revelation, the big reveal to the whodunit. But his currency is individualism: he deals with people in situations where they can't go back. They must go forward. Alone. Very few themes exert a greater pull.

The two novels he wrote after *The Spy* were well received but did not create the same frenzy. His sixth work *The Naïve and*

*Sentimental Lover* was a semi-autobiographical work that depicted the love triangle between a maundering English businessman and a bohemian couple. By le Carré's now very high standards, the book was a commercial and critical failure.

Then came the three books that would come to define him as a writer. Starting in 1974 with *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, le Carré produced a trilogy that cemented his reputation in the post-war British canon, and captured Britain as a nation in decline. In the dusty corridors, the drink-sodden, broken-down clubs of Pall Mall and the dilapidated offices of the British establishment, he brought to life a horrible vision of a country shorn of its empire, diminished on the world stage and crippled by self-importance.

The trilogy sold in astounding numbers. Alec Guinness took the lead role of George Smiley in a television adaptation. It was a global smash. In 1986, he released his autobiographical *A Perfect Spy*, which Philip Roth described it as “the best English novel since the war,” perhaps an overstatement—the two men were friends. His 1989 novel *The Russia House* was turned into a film starring Sean Connery and Michelle Pfeiffer. He was fabulously wealthy, and at his peak.

And then the wall came down.

A great irony pervades le Carré's career. As a spy, he worked against the Soviet Union, but when the victory came he couldn't stomach the outcome. As a writer, he was a critic of the establishment—but he is now part of the literary establishment. He is not afraid to throw his weight about if he thinks that his best interests are not being served. According to Sisman, le Carré has been known to end 20-year commercial relationships by letter.

I wonder whether in his moments of reflection, his former capacity for doubt creeps back from time to time. And whether he perceives that he has become, in literary terms, the very superpower that he now so deftly excoriates in his captivating books.

Jay Elwes is Deputy Editor of Prospect





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John le Carré sees himself as an outsider but is now part of the literary establishment

# What the Romans really did

Mary Beard's colourful chronicle of Ancient Rome debunks familiar myths, says *Edith Hall*



Jacques-Louis David's *The Oath of the Horatii* (1784) portrays the Roman ideal of loyalty and self-sacrifice

## SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome by Mary Beard (Profile, £25)

Ancient Roman literary critics admired writing that plunged readers into the thick of the action—in *medias res*—rather than boring them with preambles. Mary Beard plunges her reader, from the first page, into one of the most exciting episodes in Roman history.

In 63BC, the orator and statesman Cicero exposed what he claimed was a revolutionary conspiracy. It was led by the disaffected aristocrat Catiline, whom Cicero accused of plotting to assassinate all the elected magistrates of Rome, set fire to the city's buildings and cancel all debts indiscriminately. Beard writes with her customary energy, charm and intensity, resurrecting the titanic personalities who struggled to control Rome while its republican constitution was hurled into its final death throes. She uses contemporary terms like “homeland security” to make the unfamiliar accessible. Her ambivalence towards Cicero—brilliant, prolific, brave, eloquent, but vain and obnoxiously self-pitying—is palpable. By the end of the chapter we are primed to take the story for-

ward to the next phase: the assassination of Julius Caesar and the climactic conflict between Mark Antony and Octavian, soon to become Augustus. But Beard chooses instead to disorient us completely.

In chapter two she abruptly transfers us back many centuries to the very beginnings of Rome, or rather its mythical origins in the stories of Romulus and Remus and of the rape of the Sabine women. All except the final two chapters then take a broad historical sweep, structured in conventional chronological order stretching from archaeological finds dating to as early as 1000BC all the way to 212AD. The sense of chronological disorientation is, I think, deliberate. The version of the early history of Rome which has come down to us was mostly filtered by later Roman writers, both Cicero and authors working under Augustus—Livy, Propertius, Virgil and Ovid. Beard is laudably keen that we see the early history as not only gappy and inconsistent but artfully manipulated to suit the political agenda of later writers. But the effect is confusing, right from her opening sentence: “Our history of ancient Rome begins in the middle of the 1st century BC.”

By “Our history of Rome” she means “My history of Rome,” but any Roman history novice will assume her meaning is that “The history of Rome” commences at that date.

Beginners will then spend the next five chapters struggling to understand the successive waves of data about the preceding centuries—the kings of Rome, the consolidation of the Republican regime, the widening of Rome's horizons in the fourth and third centuries BC, the expansion of the empire, the violent upheavals of the “new politics” at the time of the Gracchi in the late 2nd century down to the slave revolt led by Spartacus in 73BC. We do not rejoin Cicero until nearly halfway through Beard's narrative, in chapter seven, where he is now taking on Verres, the governor of Sicily accused of corruption. But that confrontation preceded Cicero's denunciations of Catiline, with which “we” had begun “our” history. As a Classics graduate I know some Roman history, but must admit to intermittent bewilderment. I would recommend any new Roman history enthusiasts to begin on page 78 with Beard's enthralling account of the archaeological evidence for early habitations in the ▶

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Roman area. These include the remains of a two-year-old girl found in a coffin beneath the forum in a dress decorated with beads; in the 1980s archaeologists unearthed the sort of house she might have lived in north of the city, a small timber edifice with a primitive portico. It contained the remains of the earliest known domestic cat in Italy.

Beard is always at her dazzling best breathing life into the material remnants left by the ancient inhabitants of the Roman world, as she did in her prizewinning 2008 book *Pompeii: The Life of a Roman Town*. One of her hallmarks is an exceptional ability to remain up-to-date with the most recent archaeological discoveries, and communicate their contents and significance in a lively and user-friendly manner. The public has been waiting eagerly for *SPQR* since her engaging 2012 BBC series *Meet the Romans*. The greatest virtue of *SPQR* is her ability to choose individual objects or texts and tease out from them insights into Roman life and experience. These range from the enigmatic “black stone” found in the forum inscribed with words including “KING,” to a relief sculpture depicting a poultry shop, complete with suspended chicken and caged rabbits. The book contains 21 colour plates and more than a hundred others embedded in the text, every one adding an exciting dimension to her colourful chronicle.

The leading dramatis personae are evoked in stunning pen-portraits. Some ask us to reassess figures we thought we already understood well. She is impressed by Pompey, who “has a good claim to be called the first Roman emperor.” She is sceptical about Brutus’s commitment to Republican ideals. She sensibly refrains from trying to penetrate the assiduously crafted public image of Augustus to the “real” man behind the propaganda, although she admires some of his achievements. There are finely-tuned cameos in the whistle-stop tour of the 14 emperors who ruled between the death of Augustus in 14AD and the assassination in 192AD of Commodus (the son of Marcus Aurelius who plays the villain in Ridley Scott’s movie *Gladiator*). Although there are mercifully few signs of the controversialism which used to be her sole irritating characteristic, Beard rightly challenges the tradition of dividing the rulers of the Imperium Romanum into heroes and felons. The tradition, extending back to Tacitus and Suetonius, was inherited by Edward Gibbon. Beard pleads, instead, for a less judgemental and more nuanced appraisal of the way that the sensational ancient accounts of the emperors reveal the anxieties and socio-political values of the imperial era. She also emphasises that for many inhabitants of the empire, especially those living in the more far-flung territories, the personality of the emperor made little difference. This is a wonderful, lucid and thoughtful section of the book and

should be required reading for anyone setting out to study Roman emperors.

There is an attempt at a thematic rather than linear approach in one central chapter, “The Home Front,” where the discussion of family life and women is compromised by being focused, yet again, on Cicero—or rather Cicero’s relationships with his wives and daughter. But the two other thematic chapters—the last in the book—are outstanding. Here she abandons the chronological structure and looks at the rich-poor divide and the experience of people living under the Romans outside Rome. The luxurious life-style of the wealthy across the empire was astounding: some owned dozens of sumptuous villas with central heating and lavish murals, swimming pools and shady grottoes, all serviced by armies of slaves. Some rich

### “Beard is always at her dazzling best breathing life into the material remnants left by the ancient inhabitants of the Roman world”

people paraded their wealth by indulging in ostentatious feasting and pastimes; others subsidised public amenities—libraries, theatres, gladiator shows—in order to ward off the dangers posed by the inevitable envy of the poor.

Beard points out, however, that much of the physical unpleasantness of life in ancient urban centres was suffered by rich and poor alike: traffic jams, uncollected refuse, disease, gangrene-infected water. She has a pitch-perfect ear for class snobbery and the insults poured on the allegedly vulgar newly rich by the educated or aristocratic. She writes movingly about the grave-stones of ordinary Romans, artisans and semi-skilled labourers, informing posterity about their expertise and achievements as bakers, butchers, midwives and fabric dyers. She evokes well the squalid cafes and taverns where the poorer urban classes caroused. Yet she makes us face the reality that the majority of the empire’s 50 million inhabitants would have lived on small peasant farms, struggling to extract more than a subsistence livelihood. There were few changes in agricultural technology or fundamental lifestyle from the Iron Age to medieval times. The letters of Pliny the Younger are a rich source of evidence for the relationship between Roman governors and such “ordinary” people of the provinces, in his case in Bithynia and Pontus; Beard leads us from these into a revealing discussion of the problems Roman governors faced in policing the boundaries of empire (including Hadrian’s Wall) and how they largely tolerated local religious prac-

tices and cultural diversity, although Christianity became an exception.

The turbulent showdown between the Illyrian Emperor Diocletian and the martyrdom-hungry Christians in the early fourth century is one of many fascinating episodes in the history of the Romans which Beard excludes from her account by ending it in 212AD. Her logic for ending here is impeccable: this was when the Emperor Caracalla made every free inhabitant of the Roman Empire a Roman citizen, thus causing 30m individuals to “become legally Roman overnight.” Beard stresses the significance of the erasure of the millennium-long boundary between the rulers and the ruled—the completion of what she calls the Romans’ “citizenship project,” from which we can still learn, even though it subsequently failed and had always been fundamentally blemished by slavery.

Besides the history of Rome as it continued in the third and fourth centuries CE, the element I most miss is an attempt to get inside the minds of the remarkable ancient Italians in terms of their philosophy and ethics. Beard writes well on priesthoods and public religion, but is not much interested in philosophy. Despite her fixation on Cicero, who wrote philosophical treatises, she offers less on the complex thought-world and extraordinary psychological strengths—self-control, resilience, acceptance of uncompromising discipline, fearlessness in the face of death, moral fortitude, high ideals and principles—which many members of this tough and soldierly people drew from their Stoic, Neoplatonic and Epicurean convictions. She is good on Virgil’s *Aeneid* as a political poem, but has little to say about the earliest surviving Roman epic, Lucretius’s inspirational work *On the Nature of Things*. I finished *SPQR* hoping that we will one day be treated to a Beard book on the inward contours of the Roman psyche.

Edith Hall’s latest book is “Introducing the Ancient Greeks” (Vintage)



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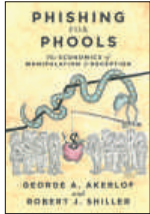
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## Books in brief

### Phishing for Phools: The Economics of Manipulation and Deception

by George A Akerlof and Robert J Shiller  
(Princeton, £16.95)



“Modern economics inherently fails to grapple with deception and trickery.” That’s the central claim of the new book by Nobel Laureates George Akerlof and Robert Shiller. Economics, they argue, assumes that we

make choices according to our best interests. In practice, though, we depart from our best interests: we eat too much sugar and spend money we don’t have. Hence the other people we deal with—Akerlof and Shiller are particularly interested in the behaviour of profit-maximising private firms—can often do better for themselves by exploiting our foibles rather than help us work in our best interests.

Can we wise up to this? The book doesn’t have much to say on that. However, it does provide brief examples of our “phoolish behaviour” (the authors make this “joke” roughly every three pages) and how it is exploited by phishermen. Neither does it explore the scope for firms to succeed by behaving better. If rivals are “phishing,” one route to success may be to show consumers how to behave differently yourself. Many firms do exactly that: cooperatives, price comparison websites, value supermarkets. But the authors don’t mention them. If the authors’ preferred solution is regulation, then that too isn’t considered.

In the end, this book is too slight to rewrite economics in the way it claims to do. It’s more like “An Evening with George and Robert” than a hard-hitting exposé. Yet its central idea is an important one and merits more attention.

Emran Mian

### 1916: A Global History

by Keith Jeffery (Bloomsbury, £25)



The history of the First World War, writes Keith Jeffery, “has quite literally got stuck in the mud and trenches of the Western Front.” In his kaleidoscopic narrative, Jeffery tells the global history of the war

by fixing on a single year. His contention is that the events of 1916 were crucial for the entire 20th century.

It is no small achievement to fit so much diverse material and argument into a single fast-paced volume. The year begins with the evacuation of allied forces from Gallipoli and culminates in the murder of Rasputin. During the course of the year we are taken to familiar locations from the war—Verdun, the Somme and Jutland—but also to locations that tend to fall off the edge of our mental map of the war such as Romania, the Caucasus, Central Asia, China and East Africa. Along the way we encounter the US in the grip of a presidential election and Ireland in rebellion.

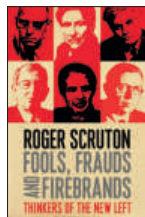
One of the most enjoyable aspects of *1916* is the way Jeffery makes connections between one corner of the planet and another, focusing on human stories rather than geopolitical convulsions. Again and again we encounter the war-weariness and exhaustion of people the world over. The year witnessed many rebellions against imperial control, from Dublin to Singapore, Sumatra to Turkestan.

In an enthralling account of violence in Central Asia, we perceive not only the cracks that were pulling apart the Russian Empire, but glimpse the leading edge of a hurricane that was about to engulf the old international order.

Ben Wilson

### Fools, Frauds and Firebrands: Thinkers of the New Left

by Roger Scruton (Bloomsbury, £16.99)



Despite its subtitle, this book by the conservative philosopher Roger Scruton is not a history of the “New Left.” The original New Left was an intellectual and political tendency that emerged in Britain in the mid-1950s after the Soviet Union’s crushing of the uprising in Hungary, and then reappeared in a different guise in the US during the following decade.

Scruton, though, casts his net much wider. *Fools, Frauds and Firebrands* (the title tells you everything you need to know) takes in thinkers as diverse as the American liberal political theorists John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin, on the one hand, and European Marxists such as Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek, on the other.

This is not a work of scholarly intellectual history, then, but rather, as Scruton puts it, a “provocation.” His noisy criticisms of left-wing thinkers in the mid-1980s signalled, he recalls, “the beginning of the

end for my university career.” Since he no longer has a university career to protect, Scruton can now tweak the nose of academic leftism to his heart’s content.

This desire to provoke sometimes gets the better of him. The discussion of Dworkin, for instance, is undermined by the hyperbolic claim that his mild liberal egalitarianism tends just as surely to a kind of revolutionary sweeping away of custom and tradition as does Žižek’s neo-Leninism. Scruton is at his best (and funniest) when trying to make sense of Badiou’s weird confection of historical materialism and Platonic mathematical theory. As he points out, it is perplexing and regrettable that an elderly French professor’s “glamorous detachment” from the dirty work of “real politics” should still possess the power to seduce.

Jonathan Derbyshire

### Project Fear: How an Unlikely Alliance Left a Kingdom United but a Country Divided

by Joe Pike (Biteback, £12.99)



As the “in” and “out” campaigns square up ahead of Britain’s forthcoming EU membership referendum, strategists on both sides could do worse than read Joe Pike’s adrenaline-fuelled, blood and guts account of the run-up to the vote on Scottish independence and its aftermath.

“Shit just got real,” one Better Together staffer says to a colleague early in the book, as they watch the signing of the 2012 Edinburgh Agreement. From then on, the pace doesn’t let up, and Pike’s enviable access to the “no” campaign’s key operators keeps us in the thick of it.

It’s often Pike’s portraits of behind the scenes figures that are most interesting—from Paul Sinclair, the “bullish, aggressive” Scottish Labour Director of Communications, whose Alex Salmond impression helped Alistair Darling rehearse a TV debate, to John McTernan, who is said to have kept pictures of Chelsea players celebrating goals, with Tony Blair’s head Photoshopped on to them.

Pike, a political journalist at Holyrood, has a parliamentary reporter’s sometimes tedious obsession with every special advisor and bag carrier to cross the campaign threshold. But on the whole he is careful to point to the significance of each encounter, and the book’s first, pre-referendum,

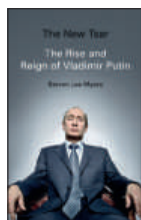
section is especially adept at leading you from TV green room to chauffeured car without ever losing sight of the looming destination.

Indeed, the book begins with a glimpse of the campaign's final weeks. "This was one of those rare moments... when the UK political establishment was caught utterly by surprise," writes Pike. Those rooting for David Cameron's EU membership renegotiation had better take note, lest it happen again.

Josh Lowe

## The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin

by Steven Lee Myers (Simon & Schuster, £20)



In 1969, 17-year-old Vladimir Putin met a girl at his family's dacha in Tosno, south-east of St Petersburg. A game of spin the bottle resulted in a brief kiss. "I felt so hot all of a sudden," she recalled, noting his "small, strong hands."

In those heady days of revolution—cultural in Paris, violent in Prague—the young Putin would listen to clandestine Beatles records, strum his guitar and dream of a career in the KGB.

These flashes of intimacy are rare moments in *The New Tsar*, a biography of the Russian president by Steven Lee Myers, the *New York Times*'s Moscow Bureau Chief, dispatches Putin's childhood in 10 absorbing pages, and his undistinguished KGB career in another 33. In less than 10 years, Putin goes from Leningrad special advisor to the presidency, by way of Yeltsin's feckless Kremlin.

In Myers's telling, this is a fortuitous upward drift more than a well-planned ascent. There was something profoundly arbitrary about the ailing Yeltsin's decision to offer Putin the office of Prime Minister in August 1999. There is also something telling in Putin's response: "I don't like election campaigns."

*The New Tsar* is an impressive and diligent agglomeration of facts. But it struggles to break out of the relentless chronology into a deeper analysis. It lacks the eclecticism of Ben Judah's dissection of Russian politics, *Fragile Empire*, or the revelatory nuggets that typically stud *Times* journalists' books. Perhaps this is Putin's fault as much as his biographer's.

For what emerges is an isolated man utterly devoid of ideas of his own, responding to acts of revolution and resistance—in Syria, Ukraine, or at home—that he, a cynic, can only dimly understand through the simplistic lens of conspiracy.

Shashank Joshi

## Power of Reading: From Socrates to Twitter

by Frank Furedi (Bloomsbury, £20)



Reading is a risky business. Or at least that is how critics in the 18th century once saw it when they described the dangers of bibliomania—an affliction caused by the over-consumption of books. Packed with a wealth of literary titbits, including quotations from, among others, Geoffrey Chaucer, Friedrich Nietzsche and Anthony Trollope (some are more relevant than others), this comprehensive and erudite study is a love letter to literacy.

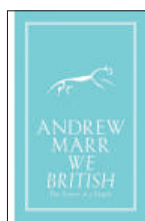
Frank Furedi charts painstakingly the changing attitudes to reading through the centuries from Cicero's attempts to draw up a hierarchy of readers, to the democratising impact of the printing press and the embrace of populist literature in the form of the novel. His position is clear: he is a defender of the reading faith.

He treats with disdain several popular cultural theories that claim that the internet reduces our attention spans. Instead he suggests that societies address why it is that people seek distraction from their everyday lives. Also refuted is the "Gutenberg Parenthesis," an argument advanced by the Danish academic Thomas Pettitt that the age of the book was a 500-year cultural blip, and the digital era has sparked a return to a more collective form of oral communication. Put simply—who needs books? We all do, says Furedi. The art of reading has endured through two millennia, despite being much maligned, due to the joy and enlightenment it engenders. This book is a timely reminder of that.

Serena Kutchinsky

## We British: The Poetry of a People

by Andrew Marr (Fourth Estate, £11.99)



Andrew Marr's triumphant *We British: The Poetry of a People* is not just an anthology, but a history of Great Britain seen through the lens of poetry.

It begins in the year 657 with the Northumbrian poet Caedmon, and takes us up to the present day, each chapter wisely and wittily guiding the reader through successive poetic movements. Marr's argument is that the British are peculiarly good at poetry (better than we are at painting, architecture and music). And it's not just that we have Shakespeare and the war poets—we also have wonderful geographic diversity. Irish, Scottish and Welsh poets are well represented.

Marr knows what he likes. He believes—and who can disagree?—that John Donne

wrote the greatest poem about love-making ever written: "Licence my roving hands, and let them go/ Before, behind, between, above, below." My only quibble is the absence of the superb Anglo-Welsh Katherine Philips (1632-1664) and her poignant poems about miscarriage and stillbirth.

This book is a labour of love, written from the heart, but also discerning and well judged. Marr is especially good on the under-rated poets of the Second World War and on the Liverpool poets, including the wonderful Brian Patten, who was surprisingly championed by Philip Larkin. There is a fine account of the origin of Adrian Henri's "Mrs Albion, you've got a lovely daughter," a homage to William Blake and Alan Ginsberg, about sassy Scouse girls. Every school kid in the country should be given a free copy of this book.

Paula Byrne

## If the Oceans Were Ink

by Carla Power (Holt, £12.99)



Since 9/11, hundreds of books have appeared about the relationship between Islam and the west. Broadly they divide into two categories: why you should be afraid and why you shouldn't be so afraid.

Carla Power's book is in the latter camp. Unlike other sympathetic accounts, though, her work does not look at the reform-minded Muslims seeking to shake up the sharia. Instead, Power, a journalist who has covered the Muslim world for 20 years and is broadly secular, describes her friendship with a traditional Muslim: the Oxford-based Mohammad Akram Nadwi or, as she calls him, the Sheikh.

They read the Koran together and try to unravel its often elusive meaning. Power is moved by the verses that speak of the similarity between Christians, Jews and Muslims and of God's endless mercy. The Sheikh, a soft-spoken man whose life's work is a multi-volume project on the forgotten history of women Muslim scholars, embodies what Power sees as the best aspects of the faith. He is also resolutely peaceful, warning in his sermons that turning Islam into a political identity will diminish the faith.

Yet Power does not hide their differences: his disapproval of homosexuality, belief in Hell and insistence that Islam is the one true path. No matter how much imagination Power musters, she cannot disguise that his worldview is very different from the liberal individualist one she was brought up with. Her book seeks to understand traditional Islamic values without patronising those who hold them by pretending they can be easily accommodated into the mainstream. **P**

Sameer Rahim

# Life

## Leith on life

Sam Leith

### Is anything still cool?

"Were you cool, then?" my wife asked me the other day. By "then," she meant during those years before our fortunes came to be intertwined. I think a little bit of milk chocolate Hobnob may have lodged in my windpipe as I attempted to answer, because what came out was something like: "Huarrrghgh-hah-haar-ghnoyoumustbefeckingJOKING..."

And that was not a word of a lie. Even among the distinctly uncool members of my peer-group—we were pigeon-toed rugby-dodgers to a man, and the closest we came to a fashion moment was an inexplicable sheep-like craze for KP Skips—I was a sorry specimen. In my mid-teens, I wore dungarees and primary-coloured granny-tops. Even expressing an appreciation of the concept—"Cooo-ELL!" I once exclaimed excitedly—was enough to cause me to be mocked for months afterwards.

But the inquiry, and the associated reminiscences, did make me think. I know most of the really seriously uncool things I did and said were done and said in an attempt to be cool. Who was cool? Who's cool now?

We knew who was cool. Clint Eastwood: he was cool. He was maybe a bit less cool when, as mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea, he found himself concerned with local bye-laws about the public eating of ice cream. But apparently he was once asked on live television by Terry Wogan about his reputation for being cool. In response, he flicked a cigarette out of a packet in his top pocket, caught it in his mouth and—without missing a beat—replied: "What do you mean by 'cool'?" That's peak cool. This is almost certainly a legend, but the fact it attaches to him tells a story.

Who else was cool? David Bowie, Lou Reed, James Dean? Yes. On the distaff side Patti Smith, Deborah Harry and Catherine Deneuve. Christian Slater pretending to be Jack Nicholson in *Heathers* was cool, or, at least, aiming for it. And The Fonz in *Happy Days* was—well—an uncool person's idea of a cool person; he was just too good-natured. All of which—the successes and the misfires and the urban legends—indicate a direction of travel.



Cool, in the traditional paradigm, is a bit paradoxical: it gift-wraps extreme personal vanity in an affectation of indifference. I don't care what you think of my haircut: but it so happens I have an absolutely astonishing haircut anyway, so suck it, losers.

Accordingly, I start to wonder whether cool has vanished from the world; has been altogether mothballed as a concept, like the Steady State theory of cosmology, or Beta-max. Of course, there is on the one hand the old geeks-have-inherited-the-earth thing: the titans of the last couple of decades have been the likes of Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. David Foster Wallace, the avowed enemy of irony, helped do for cool in literature. The pop world is run by Simon Cowell.

But I'm talking, more, about something structural. In the age of the selfie, the second half of the quasi-paradox of coolness has more or less collapsed. To be reserved and indifferent to applause, while being looked upon nevertheless, which is the sine qua non of old-style cool, is in a distinct bear market. If you aren't puppyishly presenting yourself to the world, you're not cool: you're invisible.

It's a theory, but it seems to me to be borne out by the evidence; and not just the pop and television stars. Earnestness is what all politicians now seek to project: Jeremy Corbyn is anti-cool; David Cameron seeks to play down any suggestion of coolness. Barack Obama is, or was, pretty nearly cool and it counted terribly against him; while Donald Trump, the absolute antipole of coolness, possibly the uncoolest person in the universe, was, when I last checked, the favourite for the Republican nomination.

We're living in a post-cool world. More evidence of global warming, I suppose.

Sam Leith is an Associate Editor of Prospect

## Life of the mind

Anna Blundy

### Breaking down barriers

Everyone has trouble with "The Silence." You lie there week after week babbling away and he says nothing until the dreaded "I'm afraid that's all we've got time for." You (okay, I) interpret the slightest movement as deeply meaningful and wonder whether this whole getting better project is worthwhile.



In my case a kind of mania used to kick in and I treated sessions as rehearsals for some imaginary stand-up comedy routine, testing out new material, trying to raise a laugh (occasionally succeeding). Every week or so my analyst might say: "It seems very important to you to keep talking." I would say: "Feel free to chip in." At some point I must have calmed down and allowed thoughtful silences, sad silences, angry silences—the vulnerability I'd been too terrified to make space for.

But it is a whole different experience the other way round. I dread my silent patient. I start feeling anxious the day before I see him, wondering how I can reach him. I've tried to get rid of him by declaring in supervision: "I'm not sure therapy can help." I feel hated by this patient, rejected, helpless, ridiculous.

And yet he comes, dressed neatly, apparently professional. He has not been late once in six months, he has not rescheduled or missed a session (the glaring signs of, at best, ambivalence towards therapy) and he does not watch the clock. I observe as he glowers at his feet, buries his head in his hands, sighs and closes his eyes to block me out. Frantic, I say things like: "You seem quite angry today." He replies, angrily: "No. Just tired." I say: "It seems difficult to sit with me." He laughs dismissively: "I don't know what you want." Once, after 25 minutes of watching him shift around as if trying to free himself from a torturer's restraints, I asked: "What are you thinking about?" He said: "Nothing."

Writing this, I feel conscious that qualified therapists will be appalled at my amateurish efforts to engage this man. There is plenty of literature supporting the acceptance of silence as resistance, as communication, even as a creative space. Though some theorists do suggest speaking, more suggest silently understanding the countertransference—how the patient is making you feel. Is he showing me what it felt like being with his rejecting mother? Is he communicating his own sense of helplessness? Freud himself went for interpreting the non-verbal communications: "He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore."

That's true, of course, but if the patient rejects the interpretations and persists with the angry silence then it almost doesn't help to understand what that patient is doing. I end up grappling for something to say that will help me reach him. Last week I fell back

on my old favourite—the stand-up comedy routine. I said the session seemed like a punishment that he had to subject himself to instead of kicking back in his onesie to watch the *X-Factor* with a tube of Pringles. He laughed and said: “If a cure was that easy you’d be out of a job.” I laughed too, well aware that both punishment and fantasy were mine. This shared laugh was at last a connection. He had engaged with me, shared a thought with me. “Gotcha!” I thought. I’m looking forward to seeing him next week.

*Anna Blundy is a writer training to be a psychotherapist. The situations described are composite. Confidentiality has not been breached*

## Matters of taste

Wendell Stevenson

### Feasting on shadows

First there was a perfectly empty white circle. The table was not laid with any cutlery, nor cluttering glassware. An opaque dish was placed in front of us containing a little ball of grass. We picked it up. It felt tender and squishy in our fingertips and when we put it in our mouths the fronds of sprouted teff tickled our lips as our tongues found their way into a hazelnut mud centre. It was like eating—no; it was more like exploring—a miniature earth, a new world.

Lunch at Mugaritz, a restaurant in the hills of the Spanish Basque country outside of San Sebastian, number six on the World’s 50 Best Restaurant list. Weird, confounding, elemental. Next came a jagged ridge of cockscomb, its flame shape compressed into wafers that sandwiched a crumble of coral shrimp. It crackled into shards under our teeth. Red and crisp in contrast to the soft green ball, hot after cool, barnyard funk after meadow sweet.

“It’s like eating a Terrence Malick movie,” said Adrién.

A shining white triangle of hake in a sandy pool of clam essence and ground tiger nuts; my toes digging into the sand trickles left behind by receding waves. An angelically delicate crostada, filled with nothing but air, pouf, disappeared in a bite. An autumnal mushroom, as smooth and foetal as a kidney, under a layer of gritty paprika dust. A burnt black silhouette of a fibrous fern that tasted like rhubarb and honey. Embryonic watermelons, like miniature zeppelins, in a tuna broth that I mistook for miso. A dome of glass appeared. We turned it over and found a bowl of milky bubbles, crab hiding underneath. We dredged it with a spoon covered in a chilli

and chocolate powder.

Our assumptions were challenged with every mouthful. We could not tell if we were eating fish or meat, if something was savoury or sweet. A slice of cake arrived that was toffee and fishy and defied its own ingredients: parsnip moulded with cod gelatin and layered with caramelised lactose. Dessert was crunchy codskin with lemon cream.

“What is going on here?” I asked the chef Andoni Luis Aduriz afterwards. I told him we had been amazed, tongue-tied, bewildered. Aduriz clapped his hands delightedly.

“Here there are a lot of questions!” he answered. Aduriz was an early disciple of Ferran Adrià, the godfather of molecular gastronomy. He trained at elBulli in the 1990s, and has honed his own vision at Mugaritz. He has collaborated with neuroscientists, molecular biologists and choreographers to create a new concept of experiential dining. What is cooking? What is a meal? What, indeed, is a restaurant?

“A year ago we took down the sign that says restaurant,” he admitted. “This was very scary for us to say: Mugaritz is not a restaurant anymore.”

“What is it?”

“It is memory,” he said. “It is the place we come from, the culture we grew up in, everything we see when we travel.” For Aduriz, Mugaritz is an expression of all his eating experiences. It is, above all, a personal vision of the way he sees the world, “naked, sincere.” A laser beam of genius gleamed in his eyes. I realised he wasn’t talking about cooking. He was describing the creation of art.

“We concentrate all of this, push it through a tammis [a very fine sieve] and then...” He searched for the word in the air, “rematerialise!” He smiled broadly. “And then we share it.”

When he first opened his restaurant 17 years ago, no one came. Aduriz stared at the green hills, despondent for weeks, until he realised the fields were actually full of different plants and herbs. He discovered that the rich Basque country and coast could yield extraordinary things if you just

got on your hands and knees and looked closely. Nature, minerals, meat and marine life. New and overlooked ingredients found their way on to his menus: artichoke stalks, duck tongues, chrysanthemum petals. Dishes were counterintuitive: crunchy milk, frozen cheese, sourdough soup. He uses dehydrators and fish tank pumps; enzymes and quick lime. How to cook an egg? Break it! One of his most famous dishes is baby potatoes coated in clay so they look like stones.

“And what about taste?” I asked him. Our meal was full of subtle shadow savours, smoke and sea, nut and chlorophyll; none of the usual flavour profiles that are enriched with the facile trio of salt, fat and acid. Aduriz shook his head.

“The idea of whether something tastes good or bad is just cultural,” he told me. A Basque boy will grow up eating and loving the gelatinous slime of hake throat, a boy in the Amazon will feel the same connection to a worm in a tree root.

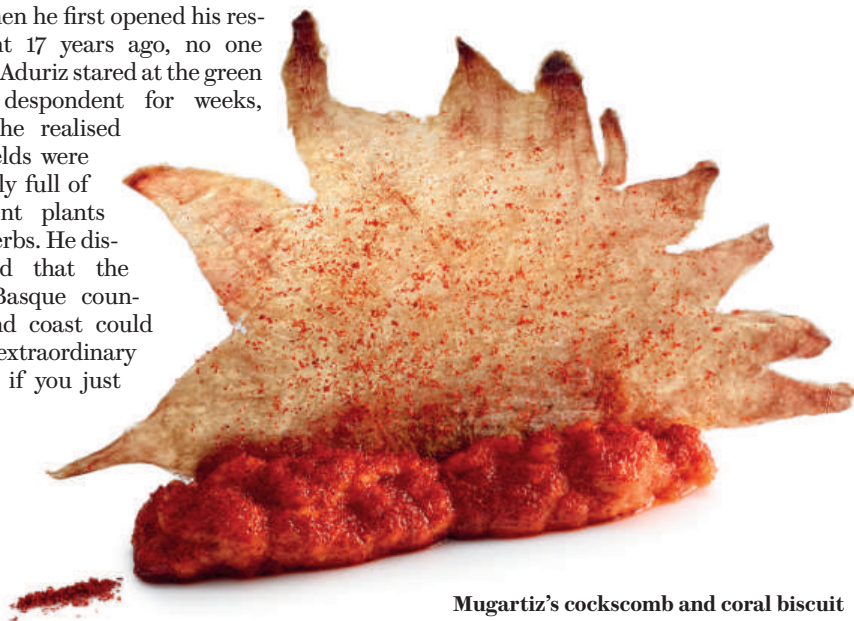
“We don’t aim to make tasty things... When people eat here, it goes beyond eating, it is emotions.”

It is the moment between creation and reaction to it that most interests Aduriz. His diners are his accomplices. For Aduriz, “the worst thing is indifference. Between provoking anger or happiness, of course we prefer happiness, but we love most of all the doubt.”

All the time he is distilling, paring down. Less.

“Concentration, austerity,” he told me. “Simple is better than complex.” Dishes as haikus, carefully constructed, edited. One of our twenty four courses was a fig leaf that we unwrapped to reveal a ripe fig with a nugget of honeycomb at its centre. Biblical; sexual. The very Original of all.

*Wendell Stevenson is an Associate Editor of Prospect*



Mugaritz's cockscomb and coral biscuit

## Wine

Barry Smith

### California's hidden edge



Do they make great wines in California? It is the question still asked by traditionalists who never look beyond Old World wines. And I have some sympathy. We all know the cliché about over-ripe and over-oaked wines with high levels of alcohol. Sadly, the cliché is borne out by plenty of mass market, and some high-end, wines from Napa Valley. But the Napa wine industry is in transition.

We should remember the Judgement of Paris Tasting, organised in 1976 by Steven Spurrier, where Californian and French wines were compared in a blind tasting. A majority of French judges voted the 1973 Stags' Leap the best Bordeaux blend over the 1970 Château Haut-Brion, and the 1973 Château Montelena the best Chardonnay. The world took notice and the French began to worry. Writing years later, Spurrier gave an explanation for this surprising outcome. In the 1970s, French winemakers had become complacent. By comparison, Californian winemakers were turning to new techniques and applying the science they had learned at the University of California, Davis. There was more attention to detail; drinkers were turning to California for cleaner, riper wines. But soon the pendulum swung the other way.

The French quickly picked up the new techniques. The introduction of the sorting table to eliminate poor quality specimens from the freshly harvested grapes happened after a fact-finding mission to California. In Bordeaux, they took note of canopy management and temperature-controlled maceration. Soon the French regained their edge.

At the same time, many younger drinkers began to tire of mass-market Californian wines, and went searching for something with a bit of edge. In Napa the hang time would take the grapes almost beyond ripeness, leading to lifeless wines. Now, things are changing and Californians are beginning to talk of *terroir*, a sense of place and tradition, and are keen to retain more vinous spirit. But attitudes have been slow to catch up and many well-made Californian wines are still overlooked. I recently suggested a Californian wine for the table at a dinner for academics only to be told by my neighbour: "I prefer wines with a little development." He was unaware that Paul Draper's wines from Ridge have always needed time. Made from grapes grown high on the Santa Cruz mountains, these wines are made in a French style, where ripening continues in the bottle. But it

led me to think of other examples. Mayacamas winery, one of those featured in the Judgement of Paris, has its vines on a mountain above the Napa Valley floor, and takes a traditional approach to winemaking. While in Napa, I recently tasted the 1989 Cabernet Sauvignon. It was still bright and clear. On the palate, it was svelte with good acidity, and apple core finish. Another mountain vineyard is Chappellet. Their 2001 and 2002 Cabernet Francs were big wines, with great depth of aroma and flavour. Dark in character with traces of oak-derived coconut, coffee and tobacco they are a tour de force. Finally, we come back to the valley floor for Christian Moueix's Dominus wines. These are French wines made in California. The vines lie at the foot of the Mayacamas range, and are dry farmed, meaning irrigation is not used unless absolutely necessary. The bunches are rinsed before being hand-picked, and are vinified in a naturally ventilated winery. The 2012 Dominus has a nose of perfumed violets. It is sleek with super-fine tannins. There is a rush of riper cherry fruit, which subsides leaving an almost nectarine finish with some nuttiness.

So, yes, they do make great wines in California, but to enjoy them you must take your time.

*Barry Smith is Director of the Institute of Philosophy at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of London*

## DIY investor

Andy Davis

### Child's play



It's not often that the children's maths homework sheds fresh light on the challenges of investing but I can now point to at least one occasion when it did, thanks to a simple game that our 10-year-old brought home. It's a puzzle that anyone can try and works best as a contest between two or more players.

If you want to give it a go—and I heartily recommend it—here's what to do. Each player draws a three-by-three grid on a piece of paper and they then take turns to roll a dice, writing whichever number they throw into one of their nine squares. The object of the game is to fill the grid with three, three-figure numbers, the winner being the player whose three numbers total closest to 1,000.

This proved a fascinating challenge. The obvious goal is to ensure each line of numbers is as close to 333 as possible but that is much easier said than done when your fortunes depend on the roll of a dice. After initially struggling, I started to think about the strategy you need to follow to arrive at the right

destination, and this is when its relevance to investing started to dawn on me.

To succeed you must understand that some of the decisions matter more than others. Specifically, getting the best combination of numbers in the left-hand column matters more than what ends up in the right: hundreds have a much bigger bearing on the total. So you have to watch the rolls carefully and seize on numbers for the left-hand squares that will add up to eight or nine. Any that don't fit must be treated as tens or units.

Put like that it's blindingly obvious but it wasn't until I had actually played the game unsuccessfully that I managed to work it out. Another lesson that became clear is that if you wait too long to fill your three left-hand squares, you will eventually be forced to accept whatever comes up on the last roll of the dice; everything will then depend on whether you can throw the number you need at exactly the right moment.

This game offers a wonderful illustration of why it is so important to identify which decisions will have a really big impact on your ability to achieve your ultimate goals, and which can be left much more to chance. It also teaches you that delaying major decisions too long can leave you with little room for manoeuvre and relying on a large slice of luck to get the result you are hoping for. These are both very valuable lessons for any investor, although I wouldn't claim for one moment that this game can show you how to identify and prioritise the major decisions, only that it is important to do so.

Of course, this exercise was never intended to offer the children an insight into investment or financial decision-making, but to me it has value as a tool to help people understand some important lessons. Sadly I suspect that it will not form a part of the financial education that our children can expect to receive further on in their school careers. If so, this seems a missed opportunity. Games are a very good way to demonstrate principles and the ones that this game highlights are important, easy to understand and have a relevance much wider than one weekend's maths homework. **P**

*Andy Davis is Prospect's investment columnist*





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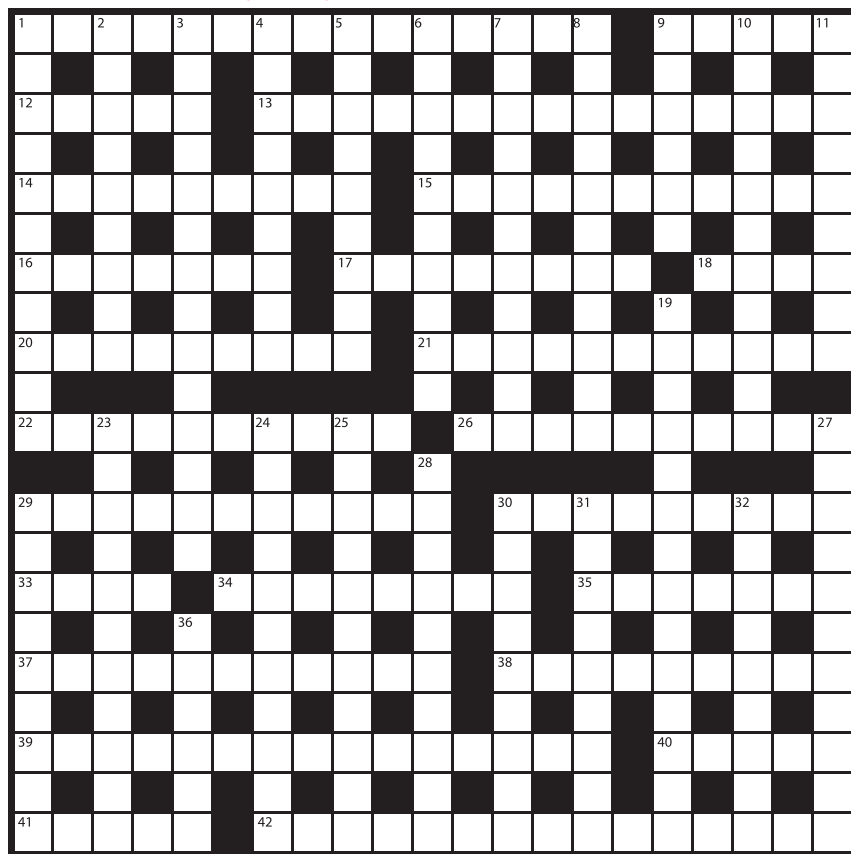
**The Case for Radical Change in Education**

This report was prepared by the PER Group to send to the political parties in May 2015. It has forewords by Anthony Seldon, Richard Harries and Frank Furedi. You can buy it postfree in the UK (paperback pp.52 A4) for the special price of £6 by sending a cheque payable to PER Group to the Group, c/o P.O. Box 16916, London SE3 7WS



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## The generalist by Didymus



### ACROSS

- 1 War cry of medieval France (8,2,5)
- 9 US athlete who won four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games (5)
- 12 Native of Palermo, say (5)
- 13 Alternative name for 3 Down (7,8)
- 14 Clergyman having authority over a group of parishes (5,4)
- 15 Spenser's gullet (7-4)
- 16 Covered in silver, across the Channel (7)
- 17 North American green long-horned grasshoppers (8)
- 18 Domestic slave in Anglo-Saxon times (4)
- 20 Assistant bishop to a diocesan one (9)
- 21 Heathery, lochan-studded wilderness near Glen Coe (7,4)
- 22 Calleva Atrebatum (10)
- 26 German city on the Neckar with the country's oldest university (10)
- 29 Staffordshire theme park (5,6)
- 30 Small French barrel organ (9)
- 33 Capital city known as Christiania from 1624 until 1924 (4)
- 34 Failure to reach a set target (8)
- 35 Factory worker who makes

- carpentry equipment (7)
- 37 April 25th is the "Major" date (8,3)
- 38 Listen in slyly (9)
- 39 Procedendo, mandamus, quo warranto or certiorari, eg (11,4)
- 40 Stan's comedy partner (5)
- 41 White poplar (5)
- 42 UN Secretary-General from 1953 until his death in a plane crash in 1961 (3,12)

### DOWN

- 1 False religious beliefs (11)
- 2 Its Central Zone departments include Boaco, Estelí and Madriz (9)
- 3 Musical instrument consisting of a pole with small bells attached (8,6)
- 4 Stormy, severe, of the weather (9)
- 5 Three-cornered lightweight sail (9)
- 6 1948 film based on the novel *Spoonhandle* by Ruth Moore (4,6)
- 7 Cloud of gas, ash and rock moving rapidly close to the ground after a volcanic eruption (4,7)
- 8 Home ground of Chester City FC from 1906 to 1990 (7,4)
- 9 Spanish steel-making city and

- former capital of the Kings of Asturias (6)
- 10 Projector which magnifies images onto a screen (11)
- 11 One who composes three quatrains and a couplet (9)
- 19 US jazz pianist who performed with John Coltrane, Johnny Griffin and Charlie Rouse (10,4)
- 23 The dabchick (6,5)
- 24 *Panthera uncia* from the mountains of central Asia (4,7)
- 25 Baked sponge with a layer of apple at the bottom (4,7)
- 27 Cornish promontory three miles south-east of Land's End (7,4)
- 28 Former coal-mining and iron-works village in the upper Swansea Valley: an anagram of "yearly fast" (10)
- 29 OT books not accepted as canonical or authoritative by the Christian church (9)
- 30 English middle-distance runner who broke three world records in nineteen days in 1985 (5,4)
- 31 Palindromic tradename for a gardening cultivating machine (9)
- 32 The tree tomato (9)
- 36 Star of the 1962 film *Lawrence of Arabia* (6)

### Last month's generalist solutions

1 Ranz-des-vaches 8 Cacolet 12 Peninsula 13 Tarradiddle 14 Newton Heath 15 Eynhallow 17 Endeictic 18 Nanoseconds 19 Canonic 20 East Melanesia 22 Rameau 24 Praise 26 Altair 29 Sustained note 31 Papeete 33 Chislehurst 34 Galingale 35 Bohemians 36 Adam's needle 37 Lee-on-Solent 39 Tricornes 40 Regrede 41 Tyrone Guthrie

Down: 1 Repenter curls 2 Nunawading Messiah 3 Dundonian 4 South Stack 5 Avalanche 6 Hitch one's wagon to a star 7 Street names 8 Clannishly 9 Criman Canal 10 Lud 11 The Owls 16 Landscape gardener 21 Arrière-pensée 23 A l'allemande 25 Red Crescent 27 Inchmahome 28 Opalescing 30 Edgbaston 32 Pentecost 33 Cobbler 38 Egg

## Enigmas & puzzles

### Delivery dilemma

Barry R Clarke



Bob the newspaper boy is about to begin his new evening delivery round. Starting at the newsagents at A, he must visit each house once only, moving one place at a time either vertically or horizontally to an adjacent house, until he reaches his own home at B. His intention is to take a different path every day until he has covered all possible routes.

### Last month's solution

The values are a = 6, b = 9, and c = 8.

The water has volume  $a^3$  and when the b bricks are inserted, it has the same volume but expressed as  $(a^2 - b)c$ . Equating these leads to  $c = a^3/(a^2 - b)$ . We now choose the possible square numbers for b, namely 1, 4, 9, and run through the possible values of a for each, to check if c is from 1-9 inclusive. There is no suitable value of c for the values b = 1, 4. However, for b = 9 we arrive at  $c = 216/27 = 8$  when a = 6. In fact, this is the only solution.

## How to enter

### The generalist prize

The winner receives a copy of *A Traveller's Year: 365 Days of Travel Writing in Diaries, Journals and Letters*, compiled by Travis Elborough and Nick Rennison. This beautifully produced collection brings together extracts of travel writing from the 16th century to the present day. Included among the excerpts are pieces by Captain Cook and Charles Darwin.



### Enigmas & puzzles prize

The winner receives a copy of *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions*, edited by Michael Church. From Japan to North America to Turkey, native musical traditions have their own fascinating history. These clearly written and concise essays are perfect to dip into and are accompanied by a series of striking illustrations.



### Rules

Send your solution to [answer@prospect-magazine.co.uk](mailto:answer@prospect-magazine.co.uk) or Crossword/Enigmas, Prospect, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1H 9AA. Include your email and postal address. Entries must be received by 3rd November. Winners announced in our December issue.

### Last month's winners

The generalist: Michael Moran

Enigmas & puzzles: George Stein

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## The way we were

# Misbehaviour at work

Extracts from memoirs and diaries, chosen by *Ian Irvine*

**John Aubrey, in his *Brief Lives*, records the appearance of the Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) at the court of Elizabeth I:**

“This Earle of Oxford, making of his low obeisance to Queen Elizabeth, happened to let a Fart, at which he was so abashed and ashamed that he went to Travell, 7 yeares. On his returne the Queen welcomed him home, and sayd, My Lord, I had forgott the Fart.”

**In 1860, Charles Dickens recalls an encounter with a “gentleman of comfortable property” from the Midlands, Mr Grazinglands, who came down to London with his wife to complete some business at the Bank of England. After leaving the Bank, the couple looked for somewhere to have lunch:**

“Jairing’s being an hotel for families and gentlemen... Mr Grazinglands plucked up a great spirit when he told Mrs Grazinglands she should have a chop there... [They] waited... twenty-five minutes for the sherry, half an hour for the table-cloth, forty minutes for the knives and forks, three-quarters of an hour for the chops and an hour for the potatoes... On settling the little bill... Mr Grazinglands took heart to remonstrate against the general quality and cost of his reception. To whom the waiter replied: ‘when individuals is not staying in the ‘Ouse, their favours is not as a rule looked upon as making it worth Mr Jairing’s while...’ Mr and Mrs Grazinglands passed out of Jairing’s... in a state of greatest depression...”

**In 1952, Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, a young officer in the Royal Scots Fusiliers doing his National Service, recalls his first meeting with the new colonel of the regiment:**

“[W]e were lined up in the officers’ mess in a hollow square (that is, a square with one side missing). The regular officers were in blues, the National Service officers in their light khaki service dress... We looked and felt incredibly smart. The atmosphere was tense.

“As the most junior officer I was last to



**Marlene Dietrich, who enjoyed a close encounter with JFK in 1962**

be inspected. Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson was a big man with... a formidable reputation. There was dead silence as he moved from officer to officer. Each had few words. At last he was standing in front of me...

“Gathorne-Hardy. I see. Any relation to the general?”

“Stiffly to attention, I said clearly and sharply, ‘Yes, sir. A niece, sir.’”

“There was an appalled silence while we stared at one another. Then I said, ‘I mean a nephew, sir. I’m sorry, sir. A great-nephew in fact, sir.’”

“But it was too late... Colonel Thompson walked briskly from the mess. A few moments later, the assistant adjutant came up to me. ‘That was not in the least funny, Gathorne-Hardy.’”

**On 4th April 1971, Kenneth Tynan writes in his diary:**

“I must record here a story Marlene Dietrich told me several years ago... In the autumn of 1962... she received a summons to have drinks at the White House the following Saturday at 6pm. She accepted, although at 7pm she had to be at the Statler Hotel, where the Jewish War Veterans were holding a dinner to honour her

for her wartime work to aid Jewish refugees. So at 6pm she arrived at the White House... The clock reached 6.15 before JFK loped in, kissed her, poured himself some wine, took her out on the balcony and talked about Lincoln. ‘I hope you aren’t in a hurry,’ he said. Marlene explained that, alas, 2,000 Jews were waiting to give her a plaque at 7pm, and it was now 6.30... ‘That doesn’t give us much time, does it?’ said JFK, looking straight into her eyes... It was all over sweetly and very soon. ‘And then he went to sleep. I looked at my watch and it was 6.50. I got dressed and shook him... ‘Jack, wake up, 2,000 Jews are waiting! For Christ’s sake get me out of here!’ So he grabbed a towel and wrapped it round his waist and took me along this corridor to an elevator... As if it

was an everyday event—which in his life it probably was.”

**In his memoirs, the American lawyer and academic Alan Dershowitz recalls meeting a client, the property developer Leona Hemsley, for breakfast in 1991. A waiter delivered a cup of coffee with a little bit of liquid spilled into the saucer. Hemsley took the cup and saucer, smashed them on the ground and told the waiter to get on his knees and beg for his job. Dershowitz writes:**

“I regret taking that case. She was a terrible person.”

**Tony Blair recalls in a magazine interview in 1999:**

“I was at a big international conference, when a woman who seemed vaguely familiar asked me where I was from... ‘I’m Tony Blair from the British Labour Party,’ I replied. ‘And you are?’

“‘My name is Beatrix and I’m from the Netherlands.’

“‘Beatrix who?’

“‘Just Beatrix.’

“‘What do you do?’ I asked.

“‘I am the Queen.’” 



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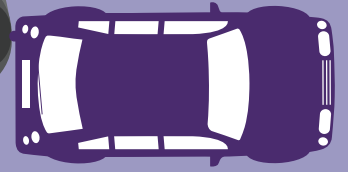


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# THE NEXT EMISSIONS SCANDAL?

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Air quality around Heathrow is already at illegal levels, and a third runway with millions more car journeys is hardly going to improve things. Which means even if Heathrow got the go-ahead, it couldn't be built or operated lawfully. Airport expansion would remain indefinitely grounded, and that would be a scandal for Britain.

The air at Gatwick has never breached EU limits, and the construction and operation of a second runway won't change that. It's the only expansion option that's legal, so it's the only one that can actually happen. Britain, let's get building.

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In Residence

# Brutal beauty

Mexico City's leading creative couple cement their passion for concrete

PHOTOGRAPHY: ADAM WISEMAN WRITER: EMMA O'KELLY





ARTIST PEDRO REYES AND HIS WIFE, FASHION DESIGNER CARLA FERNÁNDEZ, (PREVIOUS PAGE) IN THEIR MEXICO CITY HOUSE, WHICH FEATURES A LIBRARY WALL WITH ITS OWN CONCRETE STAIRCASE IN THE MAIN LIVING SPACE (THIS PAGE)

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his is a dwelling for the caveman of the future; the ruins of a civilization, now extinct, which was more advanced than the one we're living in now,' explains Mexican artist Pedro Reyes. He's referring to the house he's built with his wife, fashion designer Carla Fernández, in Coyoacán, in the south of Mexico City. Ancient Aztecs meet *The Martian Chronicles* in the form of hammered concrete walls, chunky furniture hewn from volcanic stone and an abundance of rich, overblown greenery. A 'pyramid' at one end is Carla's studio, a yard behind it will be Pedro's. It's currently a ramshackle plot occupied by the team of artisans that is helping finish the house.

The couple is in good company in Coyoacán. Fellow artists Damián Ortega and Gabriel Orozco are nearby, Frida Kahlo was born locally, and it's where her pal, the exiled Leon Trotsky, was murdered in 1940. Those in Mexico's creative circles joke that Carla and Pedro are the modern-day Frida and Diego (Rivera, Kahlo's artist husband). Like their predecessors they are bon vivants – 600 guests came to their housewarming – and like their communist forebears, they are politically engaged.

In 2008, Reyes set up *Palas por Pistolas* (guns for shovels) in the city of Culiacán, a project that resulted in the military collecting 1,527 guns in exchange for coupons for domestic appliances. The weapons were melted down and turned into 1,527 shovels used to plant trees across the city and beyond. In subsequent projects, *Imagine* (2012) and *Disarm* (2013), he turned destroyed weapons into musical instruments. Lisson Gallery founder Nicholas Logsdail, who represents Reyes, says: 'His work is both symbolically and actually transformative, evidenced particularly in monumental and far-reaching projects such as *Disarm* and >>



**'Concrete is canonical, very clichéd, but it has many possibilities'**

ABOVE, THE LIVING ROOM FEATURES A CEILING LIGHT AND GEODESIC DOME INSPIRED BY BUCKMINSTER FULLER

RIGHT, THE COUPLE DESIGNED THE CONCRETE TABLE AND KITCHEN THEMSELVES

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Split Light by *Paul Smith*





*Sanatorium.* (The latter is a transient 'clinic' first set up at New York's Guggenheim Museum in 2011 to provide therapies and placebos for 21st-century ailments.)

Before becoming an artist, Reyes trained as an architect at the Ibero-American University in Mexico City. His plan in designing the house was to transform his 1,000 sq m home from a '1980s monstrosity with an indoor pool and various eccentricities' into a modern space that 'includes hints of all of Mexico's many modernities'. A stone floor is inspired by the nearby Anahuacalli Museum, the 'temple' designed by Rivera in 1957 as a depository for his collection of 60,000 pre-Hispanic artifacts. Elsewhere, hammered concrete floors and walls were inspired by the Mexican brutalists, in particular 89-year-old Teodoro González de León, who built many landmarks across the capital. 'The use of concrete is very canonical, very clichéd, but it has many possibilities,' says Reyes, pointing out the handmade bricks covered with a wax-like concrete paste, which he developed with his men. 'There's a palette of finishes still waiting to be recovered from brutalism.'

The couple also designed much of the furniture. The lava-stone master bath and basin and the concrete kitchen table are artworks in themselves. A ceiling light, made of copper tubes threaded through electrical wire, is inspired by Buckminster Fuller, as is a 4m-high geodesic dome being completed in the living room. »

ABOVE LEFT, ONE OF REYES' 'MANO-SILLAS' CHAIRS, WITH ARTICULATED 'FINGERS' THAT CAN BE MANIPULATED TO MIMIC HAND GESTURES

ABOVE RIGHT, A STAIRCASE FEATURING HANDMADE BRICKS COVERED IN A WAX-LIKE CONCRETE PASTE, WHICH WERE DEVELOPED BY REYES AND HIS TEAM

RIGHT, THE CONCRETE AND LAVA STONE BASIN AND MATCHING MIRROR IN THE MASTER BATHROOM





It's for a show this autumn at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan.

Reyes' sign language-inspired 'Mano-Sillas' chairs appear alongside international and Mexican midcentury classics from the likes of Charles and Ray Eames and Clara Porset, and simple rural pieces such as milking stools, leather butaque chairs and seats woven from palm fronds. 'The technique was used by the Aztecs and has been recovered by the design-conscious, but not in any official way,' says Reyes. 'It would be great to make them on a large scale in other raw materials.'

Revisiting ancient indigenous skills and developing a modern Mexican language lies at the heart of Fernández's work, in particular. For 15 years she has built her label on high-fashion interpretations of traditional Mexican garments. Both her boutiques in Mexico City sell her ready-to-wear dresses, shawls, scarves and rebozos, and her mobile fashion laboratory Taller Flora rolls from one indigenous people to another and results in a demi-couture line. In 2013 she published her book, *The Barefoot Designer: a passion for Radical Design and Community*, in which she declares the future is handmade. It's accompanied by an exhibition on the process of making, which has recently travelled to museums in LA and Asia.

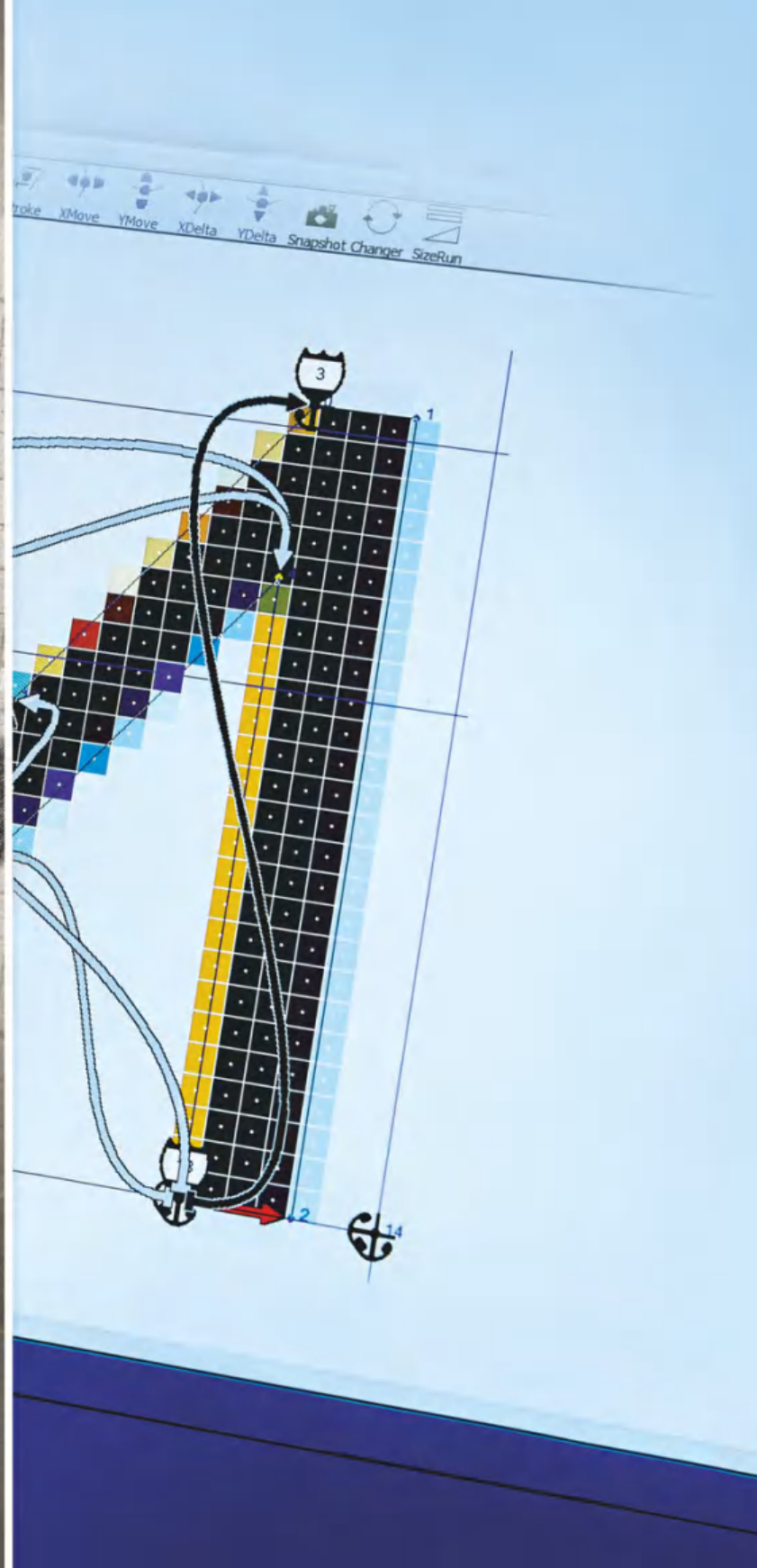
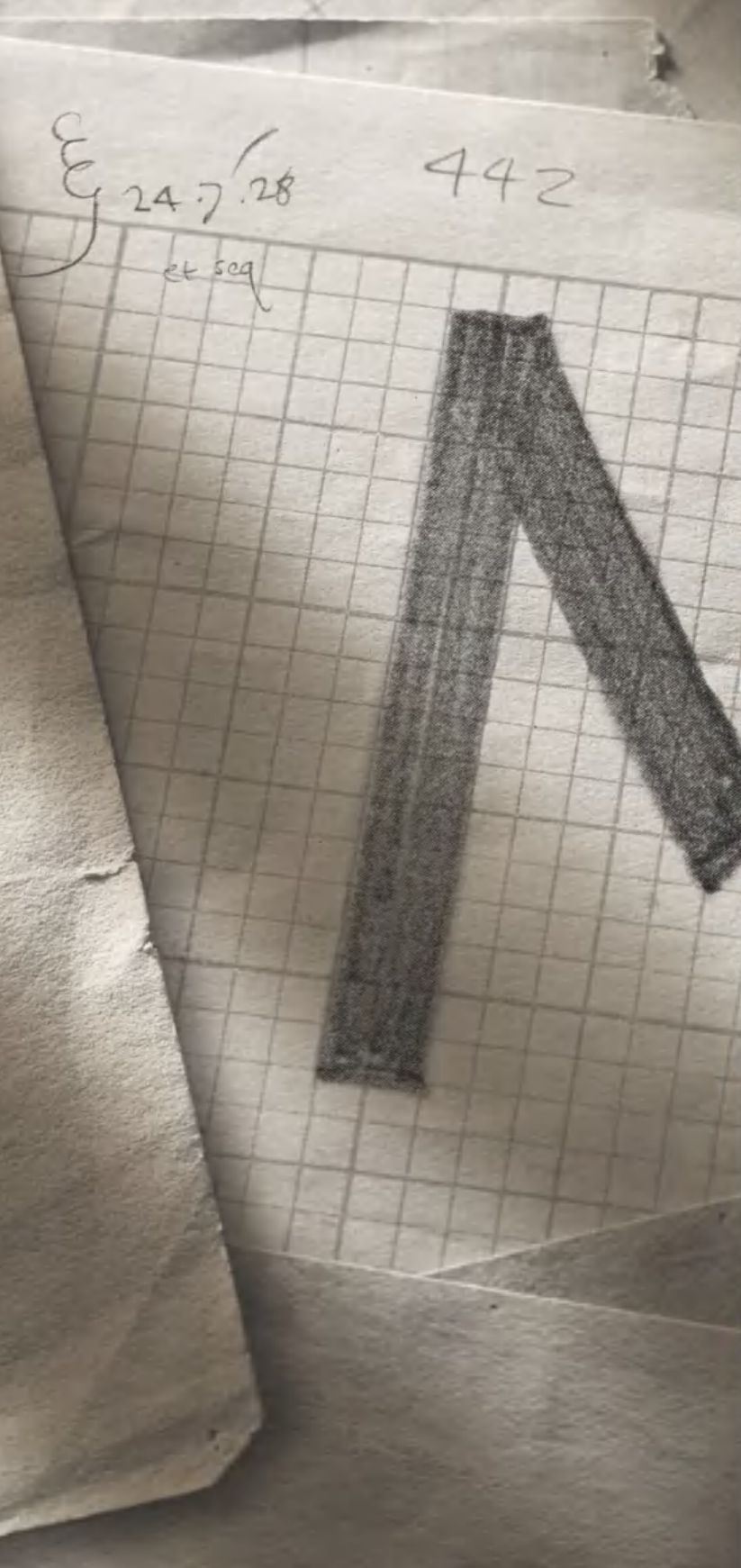
Between them, the couple has an impressive collection of textiles and art. Fernández is drawn to fine cottons from the town of Xochistlahuaca in Guerrero that are dyed with mud, cochineal, indigo and snails and loves the thick, rough wools from the highlands of Chiapas, Puebla and Tlaxcala. Her tablecloths are embroidered with fantastical animals by shamans from Hidalgo. Reyes swaps works with

ABOVE, IN THE DINING ROOM, LUSH GREENERY AND A BRIGHT YELLOW SKYLIGHT BRING A SENSE OF THE OUTDOORS IN  
BELOW, THE HOUSE'S FACADE, FEATURING WALLS IN BOTH HAMMERED CONCRETE AND BOARD-FORMED CONCRETE

contemporaries such as Spanish artist Santiago Sierra while collecting Mexican works from the likes of Ernesto Mallard and the late Mathias Goeritz.

Between the master bedroom and the two children's bedrooms is space for one of 'the best hammocks in Mexico'. These are woven by women from cooperatives in Izamal in Yucatán and Calkiní in Campeche, take two months to make and can sleep a family of four. So hectic are the couple's schedules that finding the time to curl up in their hammock is a fantasy rather than a reality. Time for that later. Right now, their unique version of *mexicanidad* is in hot demand, and it's their mission to provide it. ✱  
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In the first of a new series, we celebrate grape and grain in the best way we know how. Over the last decade, A-list architects, from Santiago Calatrava to Norman Foster, have designed extraordinary wineries, contemporary viticultural vaults and temples. Zaha Hadid has designed a wine bottle and Claesson Koivisto Rune, champagne glasses. Benjamin Hubert conceived a carafe with a built-in aerator

to improve wine's flavour, and Aldo Bakker has created essentially elegant glass sets. More traditional glassmakers such as Waterford are also adding contemporary cuts. Meanwhile, wine-making and serving is being shaken up by a new generation of growers, makers, sellers and sommeliers. What better time to begin our series pairing the finest wine and spirits with a distillation of the best epicurean design?



THIS PAGE FROM LEFT, 'TIBERIUS' BOWL, €360, BY JAIME HAYON, FOR PAOLA C. 'POKAL VE' GOBLET, £86; 'PATRICIAN' DECANTER, £380; 'PATRICIAN' CHAMPAGNE COUPE, £88, ALL BY JOSEF HOFFMANN, FOR LOBMEYR, FROM THOMAS GOODE. 'VALENCIA' CANDLEHOLDER, €120, BY JAIME HAYON, FOR GAIA & GINO. EGG PAPERWEIGHT, £130, BY CARL AUBÖCK; 'AMALFI' GLASS, £58 FOR SIX, BY MARCO SIRONI, FOR ICHENDORF MILANO, BOTH FROM WALLPAPERSTORE. 'ORGUE' LAMP, £1,650, BY STUDIO ANDRÉE PUTMAN,

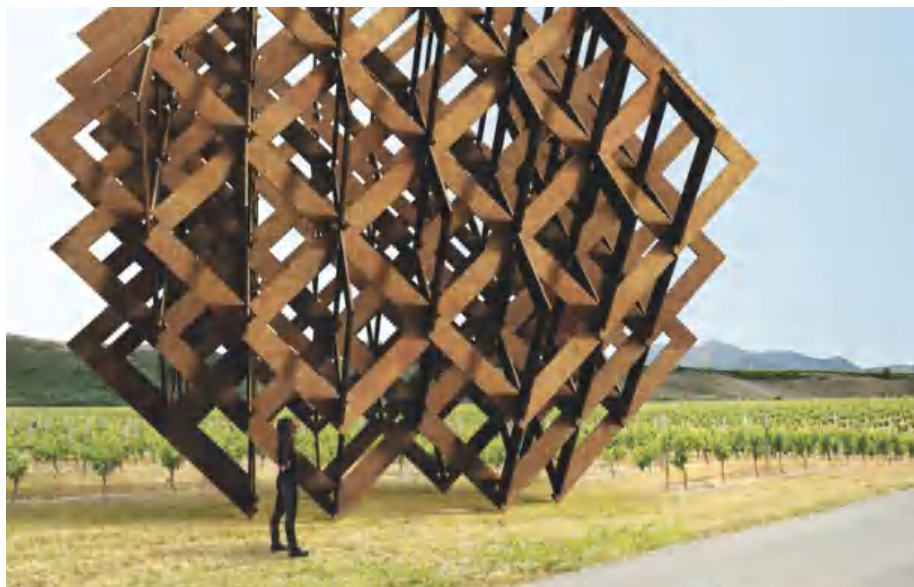
FOR LALIQUE; 'POKAL VD' GOBLET, £82, BY JOSEF HOFFMANN, FOR LOBMEYR, BOTH FROM THOMAS GOODE. WINE DECANTER, £66, BY LOUISE CHRIST FREDERIKSEN, FOR MENU, FROM SKANDIUM. 'CONNOISSEUR CLARET' JUG, £1,000, FROM ASPREY. 'MANHATTAN' GLASS, £141 FOR SIX, BY ICHENDORF MILANO, FROM WALLPAPERSTORE. 'GRAPE CUP 296C', £3,880, BY GEORG JENSEN. 'CESTO' CHAMPAGNE COOLER (USED AS POT FOR PLANT), £740, BY 4PIB, FOR DEVECCHI, FROM THOMAS GOODE. 'CLARE' TABLE LINEN, €134, BY THE ALFRED COLLECTION. 'ADAMO

& EVA' COTTON VELVET (AS BACKGROUND), £109 PER M, BY DEDAR. WINES, CLOCKWISE FROM FRONT LEFT, CHÂTEAU DE RAYNE VIGNEAU SAUTERNES 2005, £27; VIÑA TONDONIA WHITE RESERVA 1999, £30; CASA LOS FRAILES TRILOGIA 2013, £12, ALL FROM ALBION WINE SHIPPERS. ICON HILL BOTTLE, BY ZAHA HADID, FOR LEO HILLINGER WINERY, SOLD OUT. VEGA-SICILIA UNICO 1998, £420, FROM BERRY BROS & RUDD. FRAM CHENIN BLANC 2013, £21, FROM ALBION WINE SHIPPERS. PREVIOUS PAGE, 'TUBULAR STEEL BAUHAUS TABLE', £3,850, BY RALPH LAUREN

HOME. FROM LEFT, WINE COOLER, £95, BY THOMAS SANDELL, FOR GEORG JENSEN. 'NOË' BOTTLE STOPPER, £22; 'NOË' BOTTLE HOLDER, £53, BOTH BY GIULIO IACCHETTI, FOR ALESSI. 'TANK' JUG, £95, BY TOM DIXON. WINE THERMOMETER, £49, BY THOMAS SANDELL, FOR GEORG JENSEN. 'WINE & BAR' CORK WINESTOPPERS, £18 FOR THREE, BY AURÉLIE BARBRY, FOR NORMANN COPENHAGEN. 'WINE 3-PACK' POURER, £105 WITH CORKSCREW AND STOPPER, BY THOMAS SANDELL, FOR GEORG JENSEN. 'BASIC CORKSCREW', £29, BY

SIMON LEGALD, FOR NORMANN COPENHAGEN. 'FOOT' BOTTLE STOPPER, £170, BY CARL AUBÖCK, FROM WALLPAPERSTORE. 'WINE 3-PACK' STOPPER, £105 FOR SET, AS BEFORE. 'ADAMO & EVA' COTTON VELVET (AS BACKGROUND), £109 PER M, BY DEDAR. WINES, FROM LEFT, DIEZ LLORENTE CRIANZA 2011, £14; ANNE GROS & JEAN-PAUL TOLLOT LA 50/50 2012, £15; CASTILLO YGAY GRAN RESERVA ESPECIAL 2005, £68, ALL FROM ALBION WINE SHIPPERS. FOR STOCKISTS, SEE PAGE 184





### ↑ UNDER/STANDING SCULPTURE by Studio Dror

New Zealand's Brancott Estate has enlisted Dror Benshetrit to create an installation for its vineyards, where the world's first Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc was created in 1979. The New York-based designer was inspired by the combination of science and art that Brancott stands for, which reminded him of his own passion for geometry and

physics. His sculpture, a render of which is pictured above, is to be unveiled in 2016. The 9m-tall Corten steel structure appears to be stretching open through its network of rhomboid shapes. Called *Under/Standing*, it has inspired a limited-edition steel wine rack, also available next year. [brancottestate.com](http://brancottestate.com)



### ◀ VINTAGE LABELS from A Vida Portuguesa

Our friend Sir Paul Smith saw this collection of old Portuguese labels and thought we would like them. Including designs from spirit and syrup specialist Fábrica Ancora, once based in Lisbon's fashionable Chiado district, the labels are now available to buy in sets of 12-15 from our favourite local souvenir purveyor, A Vida Portuguesa. Through a combination of art nouveau motifs and hand-lettered typography, the colourful labels offer a fascinating glimpse into a golden age of packaging design. [avidaportuguesa.com](http://avidaportuguesa.com)

### ➔ BRECON ESTATE WINERY by Aidlin Darling

The Brecon Estate Winery's recent makeover is the brainchild of San Francisco practice Aidlin Darling Design. Located in Paso Robles (the fastest growing wine region in California), the estate was housed in a building that 'had virtually no relationship to the land that surrounded it', explain the architects Joshua Aidlin and David Darling. They completely reorganised the production facility, partly cladding it in untreated cedar. The tasting area (pictured here) is a key element of the new design. Spilling out onto a sizeable, cantilevered deck, it creates a clever transition between indoors and outdoors. Future plans include a new subterranean production facility. [breconestate.com](http://breconestate.com); [aidlindarlingdesign.com](http://aidlindarlingdesign.com)



### ▣ GRAPPA DI PRATOLUNGO

by Alberto Alessi and Laura Pessina

Last year, designer Alberto Alessi launched his wine label, fulfilling his dream of producing wine in his native Lake Orta, located to the west of Lake Maggiore in northern Italy. In 2001, he and his wife Laura Pessina bought a 16th-century farmstead there (which was renovated by their friend and colleague Alessandro Mendini), and a few years later started working on the first wines under the label La Signora Eugenia e il Passero Solitario – meaning Madam Eugenia and the Solitary Sparrow, after the house's original owner and the local fauna. This winter, grappa was added to the production. Six years in the making, the fine Italian spirit is the fruit of a collaboration with local distilleries and features different grapes, depending on each year's harvest. The identity of the project and the labels were created by Spanish designer Martí Guixé, a long-time Alessi collaborator, and each bottle is numbered and signed by Alessi and Pessina. €44 for 50cl, from *La Signora Eugenia e il Passero Solitario*, [lasignoraeugeniaeilpasserosolitario.com](http://lasignoraeugeniaeilpasserosolitario.com)





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# DEPARTURE INFO

Retro glamour in Amsterdam and artistic licence on the Left Bank



## ■ SUITE SUCCESS

Above, in the Montana's Left Bank icon-inspired suites, Vincent Darré has adorned walls with illustrations, *marouflé* abstractions, lacquered wood cabinetry or mirrors, adding flea market finds and Maison Darré pieces. The Bleu Acide suite, pictured, nods to Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque

## ■ TILE ORDER

Right, vintage bar stools and a graphic marble floor at San George restaurant, where chef Bastiaan Doesburg's Venetian-inspired menu features Italian classics, such as vitello tonnato, burrata di bufala, bistecca tagliata and spaghetti alle vongole



## Affair of the art

HÔTEL MONTANA, PARIS ↑

In the typically Parisian pocket of Saint Germain, the Montana's sober new black resin facade, by architect Elisabeth Lemerrier, belies the whimsy inside, where the famed nightclub and restaurant, plus six new suites, have been delightfully reimagined by Vincent Darré. He has treated each suite as a room in the home of a Left Bank icon such as Serge Gainsbourg or Jean Cocteau. **Amy Verner**  
28 rue Saint-Benoît, tel: 33.1 5363 7920, [hotel-lemontana.com](http://hotel-lemontana.com). Rates: from €1,200

## Slice of pizzazz

SAN GEORGE, AMSTERDAM ←

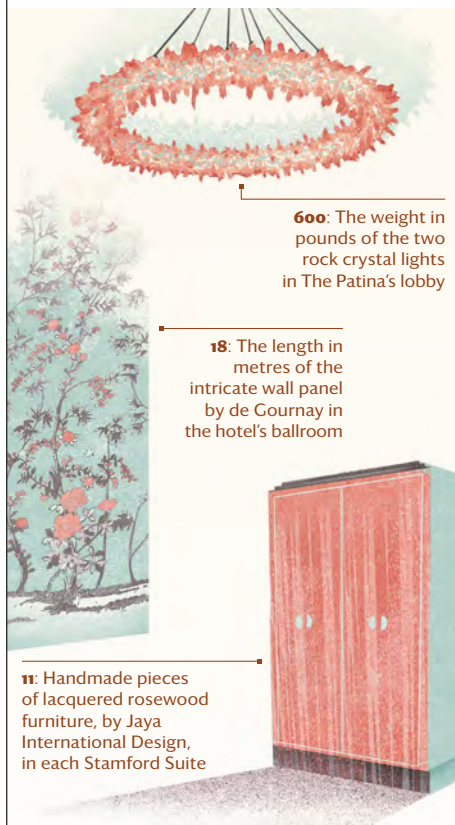
This colourful addition to the Netherlands' George family of restaurants exudes a 1950s Mediterranean glamour, courtesy of Thomas Geerlings and Sascha Faase of interior design firm Framework Studio. Brass detailing, Serge Mouille light fixtures, vintage bar stools from a Monaco casino, and American photographer Slim Aarons' portraits of high society add pizzazz.

**Micha van Dinther**

Stadhouderskade 7, tel: 31.20 303 2864, [cafegeorge.nl/sangeorge](http://cafegeorge.nl/sangeorge)

# ARTFUL LODGER

From a Richard Meier-transformed historic house in Singapore to a quietly modern Balinese beach retreat, this month's best new hotel openings



**600:** The weight in pounds of the two rock crystal lights in The Patina's lobby

**18:** The length in metres of the intricate wall panel by de Gournay in the hotel's ballroom

**11:** Handmade pieces of lacquered rosewood furniture, by Jaya International Design, in each Stamford Suite

## History class

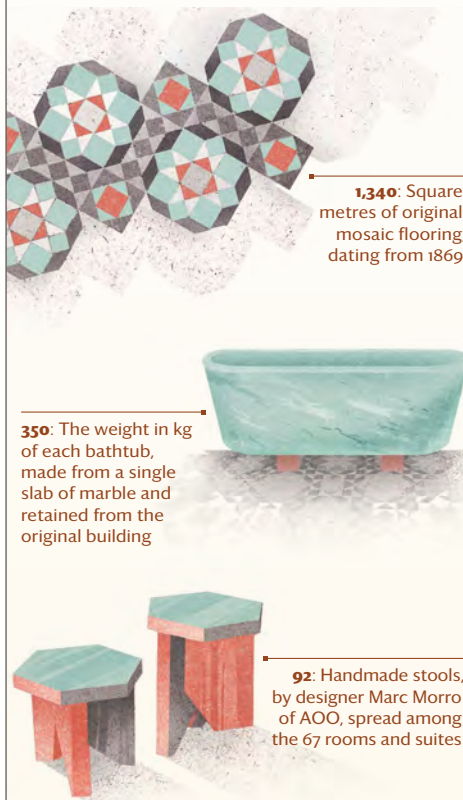
THE PATINA, CAPITOL SINGAPORE

One of the more pleasing trends to emerge out of Singapore's hyperventilated hotel scene is an eagerness to embrace, rather than demolish, the dwindling supply of historic architecture. Case in point is The Patina, the 157-room flagship hotel that's part of a multimillion-dollar, mixed-use complex in the city's downtown district. Two grand piles – the Capitol, built in 1933, and Stamford House, in 1904 – have been consolidated by architect Richard Meier into a sprawling 542,000 sq ft complex that, when complete, will include private residences, a cinema and a shopping mall. The Patina is noteworthy, too, for being one of the last projects by the late interior designer Jaya Ibrahim. The drama of the original high-corniced ceilings and grand windows is offset by an art deco mood created by lacquered rosewood, shiny silver nickel, marble and thick textiles. And at one's beck and call is an army of whip-smart concierges, ever ready to secure that elusive dinner reservation. **Daven Wu** 15 Stamford Road, tel: 65.6368 8888, patinahotels.com. Rates: from S\$650

## Local hero

CASA BONAY, BARCELONA

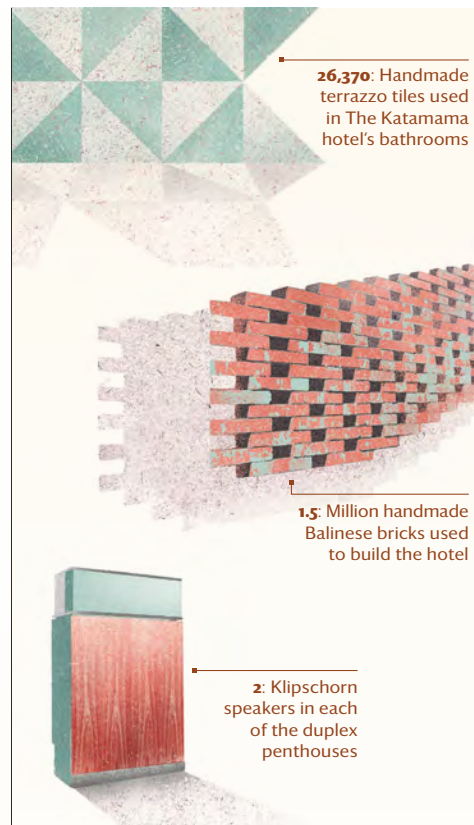
The newly opened Casa Bonay is housed in an immaculately preserved 19th-century building in Barcelona's leafy Eixample district. Originally built for the industrialist Bonay family, which still owns the property, the former home and artists' residence has been refurbished by the Brooklyn-based Studio Tack, which lent a soft minimalism to the interior's original mosaic floors and solariums, flooding rooms and public spaces with light. Hotel founder, and Barcelona native, Inés Miró-Sans brings her experience from the Ace New York to the proceedings, calling on local creative talent to attract a youthful crowd: coffee comes from acclaimed Catalan baristas Satan's Coffee Corner, while Mother provides cold-pressed juice, and indie publisher Blackie Books has curated the hotel's library. The local touch pervades the guest rooms, where one can soak in a marble tub original to the building, and the rooftop, where an orchard and a herb garden encourage visitors to linger. **David Paw** Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 700, tel: 34.6 7850 1408, casabonay.com. Rates: from €130



**1,340:** Square metres of original mosaic flooring, dating from 1869

**350:** The weight in kg of each bathtub, made from a single slab of marble and retained from the original building

**92:** Handmade stools, by designer Marc Morro of AOO, spread among the 67 rooms and suites



**26,370:** Handmade terrazzo tiles used in The Katamama hotel's bathrooms

**1.5:** Million handmade Balinese bricks used to build the hotel

**2:** Klipschorn speakers in each of the duplex penthouses

## Island dream

THE KATAMAMA, BALI

Launching a hotel in Bali – an island already heaving with first-rate properties – is always going to be a dicey business, but our bets are firmly on The Katamama. Opening on one of Seminyak's last prime stretches of beach, the 58-suite hotel is the first salvo in an ambitious mega-development that will eventually include a second hotel, designed by OMA's Rem Koolhaas, and a third, by Brazilian architect Marcio Kogan. For The Katamama, the owners (also behind the island's beloved Potato Head Beach Club) have tapped Indonesian practice Andra Matin and Singapore-based interior designers Takenouchi Webb. The result is a quietly modern space that's layered with acres of terrazzo, Balinese bricks, teak and handmade Javanese tiles. Scattered throughout the public spaces and suites are artwork, furniture and tchotchkes from the owners' collection. It's likely, though, that the focus will be on the mod-Spanish menu at the house restaurant MoVida, and the tropical-inflected cocktails at the Akademi bar. **DW** Jalan Petitenget 51B, Seminyak, tel: 62.361 302 9999, the-katamama.com. Rates: from \$290

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HOTELS

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# 78

COTTON HOUSE HOTEL  
BARCELONA



LÁZARO ROSA-VIOLÁN *INTERIOR DESIGNER*

AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION HOTELS  
WARMLY WELCOMES





THIS PICTURE, THE DRAWING ROOM AT SOHO HOUSE ISTANBUL, WITH 19TH-CENTURY FRESCOES AND ROSEWOOD DOORS

BELOW, IT IS HOUSED IN PALAZZO CORPI, BUILT IN 1873 AS THE HOME OF A GENOISE MERCHANT



# High five

Wallpaper's Best Urban Hotels 2015: a quintet of winning new properties, given the nod by our prestigious international panel of frequent flyers



## Soho House Istanbul

The hyperactive Soho House group shows no sign of slowing down, though it will be hard to top its Istanbul edition. Locating the 87-room property in artsy Beyoğlu may have been an obvious choice, but the group has taken a bold move in commandeering the former US embassy, Palazzo Corpi, and turning it into a millennial pasha's pleasure palace. The 19th-century pile's original frescoes, marble floors and rosewood doors are now complemented by judicious lashings of early 20th-century furniture and futuristic chandeliers, while two new wings house a restaurant and more guest rooms alongside a Cowshed spa, a ballroom, a 49-seat screening space and a rooftop pool. The most atmospheric rooms are in the original palazzo, but all share a common palette of ikat cushions, arabesque tiles and kilims. The star attraction is the rooftop Mandolin Terrace restaurant, which offers stunning views over the city and the Golden Horn. *Evliya Çelebi Mahallesi Meşrutiyet Caddesi 56, [sohohouseistanbul.com](http://sohohouseistanbul.com). Rates: from €195*





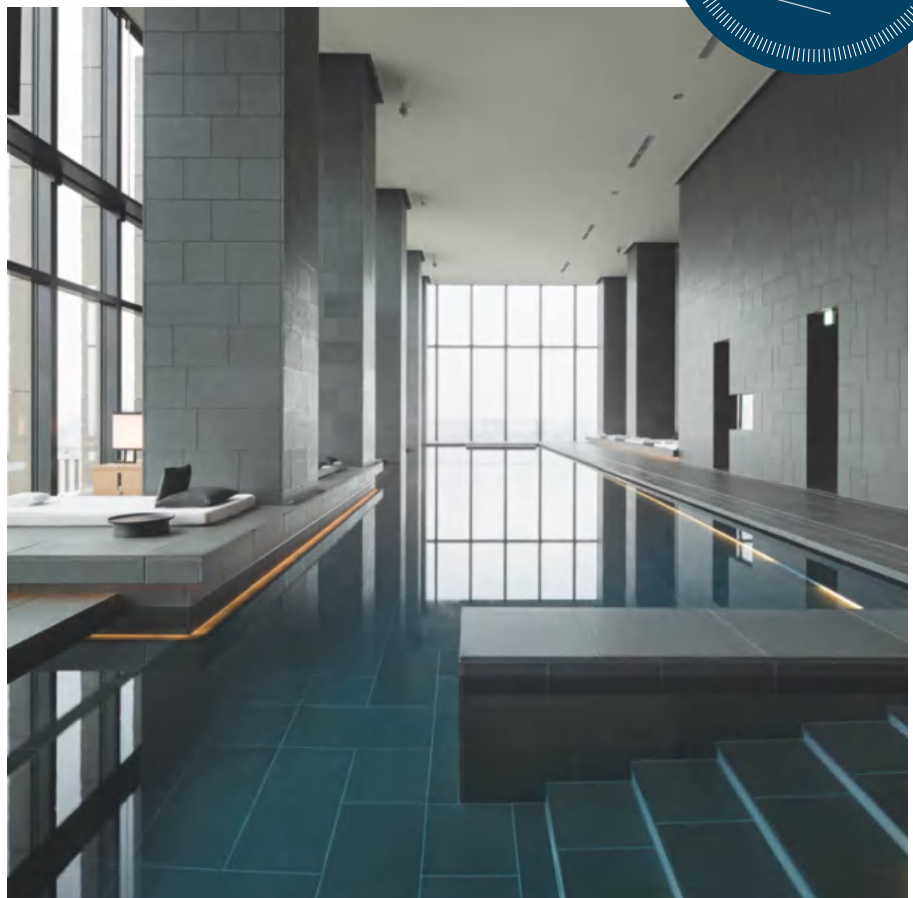
THIS PICTURE, THE AMAN TOKYO'S SOARING LOBBY, WITH ITS JAPANESE ROCK AND WATER GARDEN  
BELOW, THE BASALT-LINED 30M SWIMMING POOL



## Aman Tokyo

Since taking over the stewardship of the Aman hotel group, Vladislav Doronin (W\*193) has proven to be every bit as canny as Adrian Zecha, the visionary hotelier who launched the first Aman in 1988. Choosing to open the group's debut Japanese property in downtown Tokyo – an already heavily saturated market – was a calculated risk, but it's a foolhardy punter who bets against the Aman's pulling power, much less one as gorgeously austere as the 84-room Aman Tokyo. Designed by Kerry Hill Architects, a long-time Aman collaborator, the hotel occupies the top six, light-washed floors of the 38-storey Otemachi Tower, resplendent in a palette of blonde-hued camphor wood, layers of washi paper, shoji screens and bathrooms with deep ofuro tubs. Needless to say, the views of the city from this height are impressive. But there's more to see on the ground floor: a café that opens on to the lush greenery of the Otemachi Forest. Its sumptuous afternoon teas – delicate pastries served in bento boxes alongside sparkling sake created by Masumi – attract long queues. Alternatively, hightail it back up to the 2,500 sq m spa for a shiatsu with herbs and mineral salts.

*Otemachi Tower, 1-5-6 Otemachi, Chiyoda-ku, aman.com. Rates: from ¥95,000 (\$792)*



THIS PICTURE, THE VILLAS AT BLOSSOM HILL INN COME WITH GLASS-ENCASED BATHROOMS  
BELOW, RIAD GOLOBOY OFFERS A MIX OF MOROCCAN FLOURISHES AND MIDCENTURY STYLE



### ▲ Blossom Hill Inn, Hangzhou

Built on the edge of the Xixi Wetlands, this 66-room hotel was conceived by architect Marcelo Joulia. Low-slung villas set in the reed-fringed marshes are furnished with bamboo screens and local woods. There's a communal fire pit, perfect for winter evening drinks, a spa, a pool and a cinema. *Longshezui, Xixi Wetland, Wuchang Avenue, tel: 86.571 8873 0606, blossomhillinn.com. Rates: from RMB875 (\$137)*

### < Riad Goloboy, Marrakech

Riad Goloboy owner and designer Béatrice Faujas has balanced traditional Moroccan flourishes with a distinct but light modern touch in the hotel's eight suites and intimate public spaces. Filigreed archways and dark stone floors are unexpectedly offset by midcentury Danish furniture and bold hits of colour. The kitchen serves up organic local fare, while the rooftop terrace offers vignettes of the Koutoubia Mosque. *94 Derb Sidi Mbarek, tel: 212.661 23 03 05, riadgoloboy.com. Rates: from €80*



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" "\$%& "

## Best Urban Hotels 2015

THE MIAMI BEACH EDITION'S TOP-FLOOR DUPLEX SUITE, THE BUNGALOW PENTHOUSE, BOASTS A WRAP-AROUND BALCONY WITH LAP POOL



Best Urban  
Hotels 2015  
Highly  
Commended

### The Miami Beach Edition, Miami

It's been 31 years since Ian Schrager opened his first hotel, Morgans, in New York, but the pioneering hotelier has clearly not lost his touch. His new Edition brand continues to impress with a savvy mix of energetic design, homey touches and youthful buzz. The Miami Beach Edition – a renovation of the historic 1950s Seville Hotel on a 3.5-acre private enclave – wins applause for tapping into a happy combination of spectacular, beach-front ocean views, year-round sun, and Miami's ready supply of great art, architecture, music, fashion, cuisine and design. It comprises 294 guest rooms including suites, bungalows and

a soaring penthouse, all featuring light oak-panelled walls and white soft furnishings. The breezy interiors by Yabu Pushelberg and ISC Design Studio segue seamlessly from a 1950s Havana vibe to a sexy nightclub that Schrager says picks up right where Studio 54 left off. Meanwhile, chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten lures sun-warmed bodies in from the beach with a Mexican-infused menu (featuring dishes such as crispy Florida grouper tacos, avocado and jalapeño pepper pizza and tres leche cake) at in-house restaurant the Matador Room.  
2901 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, tel: 1.786 257 4500, [editionhotels.com](http://editionhotels.com). Rates: from \$429

### OUR JUDGES

**Elham Salamé**  
Fashion buyer and art collector, Beirut

**Hidetoshi Nakata**  
Ex-footballer and entrepreneur, Japan

**Pete Cashmore**  
Founder/CEO of Mashable, New York

**Helena Rizzo**  
Chef/owner of Maní, São Paulo

**José Neves**  
Farfetch founder, London

**Swaady Martin-Leke**  
Entrepreneur, Johannesburg

### BEST OF THE REST

The Serras, Barcelona  
Sunrise Kempinski Hotel, Beijing  
W Hotel, Bogotá  
The Temple House, Chengdu  
Chicago Athletic Association, Chicago  
The Dean, Dublin  
Puro Hotel, Gdansk  
Tribute Hotel Yau Ma Tei, Hong Kong  
Nest Hotel, Incheon  
Raffles, Istanbul  
Suján Rajmahal Palace, Jaipur  
Four Seasons Hotel The Westcliff, Johannesburg  
The Beaumont, London  
The Principal, Madrid  
The Larwill Studio, Melbourne  
Excelsior Hotel Gallia, Milan  
The Flushing Meadows, Munich  
Baccarat Hotel, New York  
Park Hyatt, New York  
Hotel Sant Francesc, Palma  
Les Bains, Paris  
The Peninsula, Paris  
Vincci Hotel, Porto  
InterContinental Double Bay, Sydney  
Rooms Hotel, Tbilisi  
The Norman, Tel Aviv  
Le Méridien, Thimphu  
JW Marriott, Venice  
Elma Arts Complex Luxury Hotel, Zichron Ya'acov



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Meire und Meire

# WELLNESS

From Swedish saunas to Korean purifiers, destinations and innovations for body and mind

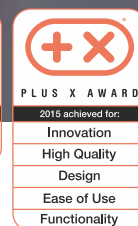
## Top form

We're as svelte as our suiting thanks to a trim new gym kit from Berluti

You don't really need to work out to wear Alessandro Sartori's slim-fitting tailoring for Berluti, but it probably helps. Now the French menswear house has made keeping trim and looking fine just a little bit easier and a whole lot more stylish. Its new Toys for Boys collection includes a skipping rope, a body expander and a set of dumb-bells and rack. Engineered in aluminium and crafted from American walnut, the set is trimmed with Berluti's patinated Venezia leather in tobacco, blue or Saint-Émilion red, and produced in collaboration with German high-end gym equipment specialist Hock.

SKIPPING ROPE, €380;  
DUMB-BELLS, €980  
FOR SET; DUMB-BELL  
RACK, €380, ALL PART OF  
THE TOYS FOR BOYS  
COLLECTION, BY BERLUTI

JACKET, £2,763; JUMPER,  
£810; TROUSERS, £605;  
SHOES, £1,350, ALL BY  
BERLUTI, BERLUTI.COM



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## ■ HOT METAL

Sweden's most unorthodox sauna can be found in Gothenburg's Frihamnen harbour, an industrial site being transformed into a new Jubilee Park ready for the city's 400th anniversary celebrations in 2021. The work of architectural collective RaumlaborBerlin, the sauna, with space for 30 bathers, is built of repurposed corrugated panels and features two changing rooms, with walls made of 12,000 recycled glass bottles.

[raumlabor.net](http://raumlabor.net); [goteborg2021.com](http://goteborg2021.com)



## ■ SHOWER PLAY

In many ways, design helps solve problems you didn't know you had. For instance, have you been suffering from a 'cluttered shower experience'? Well, you have. Thankfully, bathroom specialist Axor has teamed up with design duo Barber & Osgerby to create the Axor One. 'It brings all the disparate controls to one place, into one unit,' explains Jay Osgerby. 'It's simpler to install and simpler to use.' Elegantly intuitive, the Axor One comes in 15 finishes and features a dial to control temperature, a lever to adjust flow, and side paddles to switch from overhead to side to hand-held deluge. From £1,182, [one.axor-design.com](http://one.axor-design.com)



# The 24-carat facial

Gold and diamonds make for sparkling skincare

Never mind the humble mud mask, facial treatments have taken an extravagant turn of late, with gold and diamonds not merely appearing as ingredients in products, but being used on skin in their pure form as well. At the Sun Gardens resort in Dubrovnik, the OCCO-run spa is famed for its Soin Mille Lumière (£145 for 90 minutes, [dubrovniksungardens.com](http://dubrovniksungardens.com)),

a rejuvenating facial using Maria Galland's gold-infused serum and face cream, and a mask comprising sheets of 24ct gold leaf. At London's Four Seasons, meanwhile, the deep-cleansing Black Diamond facial (£125 for 60 minutes, [fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com)) is designed for men by skincare label Hommage and relies on black diamond-dust powder to brighten the complexion.

## ■ SOAP STARS

A collaboration between French multidisciplinary artist Mathilde Lehmann and product designer Valentine Sée, Seem specialises in miniature sculptural soaps. Featuring layered colours, they are made using organic vegetal oils. From €25, [seemsoap.fr](http://seemsoap.fr)



## Clean air act

Smart ways to keep your trainers, and your whole home, fresh



Running, as the ever-increasing legions of pavement-pounders will tell you, is good for heart and mind. But it may leave your trainers a little soggy and, if not assiduously aired, none too fragrant. Korea's 250 Design has come up with a pleasingly practical solution: a natural, non-electric shoe dehumidifier that

will suck your trainers dry and odourless with minimum fuss. The device comes in a range of colours and is neat and discreet enough to pack in a sports bag. *Water vacuum, KRW25,000 (\$22), by 250 Design, 250.or.kr. Sneakers, £340, by Tod's, tod's.com*



### Bottle humidifier

Designed by Seoul studio Cloudandco for 11+, this is a small feat of technology and minimalism. Devised to help humidify domestic spaces or offices, it is equipped with an LED indicator, an integrated USB cable and an energy-efficient ultrasonic nebuliser.

\$90, [elevenpl.us](http://elevenpl.us)



### Hakudo botanical purifier

Inspired by the Japanese incense ceremony, this appealingly low-tech air purifier was created by scent specialist Aoiro Airdesign. It comes in a tight-lidded wooden box containing a cube of black ceramic coal, which acts as a diffuser for a fragrance composed from 11 different plant extracts. €89, [hakudo-purify.com](http://hakudo-purify.com)

## ■ DRINK ME, EAT ME

Scandinavia has long been where healthy living and good design go hand in hand, as demonstrated by these two particularly innovative brands. Kille Enna, a renowned Danish chef, author and photographer, has spent seven years developing Taste of a Scent - four drinkable aromas designed to be sprayed into a glass of springwater. Pioneering Swedish algae farm Simris, meanwhile, has launched two lines of supplements, with packaging by Stockholm-based design agency Snask that reflects the colours found in the 50,000-plus known species of algae. The jewel-coloured glass jars of the Simris Algae Omega-3 line offer a plant-based alternative to fish oil, while the Simris Select range features novel snacks such as chlorella crispies, algae teas and sundried spirulina sprinkles.



DAMASK ROSE/HEATHER FLOWERS AROMA EXTRACT, €118 FOR 50ML, BY KILLE ENNA, [KILLEENNA.COM](http://KILLEENNA.COM). ALGAE OMEGA-3, SEK370 (€40); FINEST CHLORELLA, SEK160 (€17), BOTH BY SIMRIS, [SIMRISALG.SE](http://SIMRISALG.SE)

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## Wellness

THE LASA MARBLE-LINED  
HAMMAM SUITE AT THE  
GRAND HOTEL TREMEZZO'S  
REFURBISHED VILLA EMILIA  
SWIMSUIT, £238, BY LA PERLA

# Dream steam

The architects who turned Lake Como's Grand Hotel Tremezzo into a super spa, plus the best new wellness destinations worldwide

PHOTOGRAPHY: ESTER GRASS VERGARA FASHION: FRANCESCA CEFIS WRITER: NICK COMPTON





**T**he Grand Hotel Tremezzo, overlooking Lake Como, Bellagio and the Grigne mountains and adjoining the gardens of Villa Carlotta, is, as the name hints, a fabulous if faintly ridiculous decadent confection.

The art nouveau pile was opened in 1910 by Enea Gandola and his wife Maria Orsolini and taken over in the 1930s by the Sampietro family, who established it as an A-list draw. Greta Garbo namechecked it in the 1932 film *Grand Hotel*. (Garbo's preferred room, 113, is named in her honour.) The hotel changed ownership again in the mid-1970s and last year Valentina De Santis became CEO, the third generation of the De Santis family to own and run the hotel.

De Santis has determined on dragging the hotel into the 21st century while losing none of its original charm. Indeed, the hotel is now a cinematic fantasy of a favoured spot on the Grand Tour: no iPads but newspapers clamped in wooden poles, and wingback chairs in pastel shades.

Local architect firm Venelli Kramer has played a key part in the hotel's reinvention and reinvigoration, drafted in to add new spa facilities. The architects began by turning a narrow and largely unused arched passage under the hotel's main entrance into the Espa-partnered T Spa. It now houses a 15m infinity pool, comprising two linked strands, and a sundeck with views across the lake. The team also cut into the hotel's foundations, linking this narrow strip of previously unloved real estate to an outdoor »



## WELLNESS ON TAP

THE DOMESTIC BATHROOM IS BEING SHAPED BY THE DESIRE FOR A SPA-STYLE EXPERIENCE, BELIEVES AXOR CHIEF PHILIPPE GROHE. HERE HE SHARES HIS TAKE ON THE LATEST WELLNESS-INSPIRED TRENDS.

Fixtures with generous surface areas and intuitive functionality refine the process of showering.

Showers are gradually replacing bathtubs as 'wellness centres' within the bathroom, thanks to their different jet and steam options.

Private bathrooms are being divided into 'need' and 'desire' areas: a space for personal hygiene and a space for relaxation and wellbeing.

Rest areas are now included in the bathroom layout; an adjoining lounge lets us collect our thoughts before starting or ending our day.

ABOVE, THE INFINITY POOL'S SUNDECK LOOKS OUT ACROSS LAKE COMO

SWIMSUIT, £320, BY ERES

OPPOSITE, THE POOL IS SET IN AN ARCHED PASSAGE BENEATH THE HOTEL AND COMPRISES TWO LINKED BATHS

SWIMSUIT, £425, BY CHANEL

whirlpool and lounge. Venelli Kramer inserted a treatment area and changing rooms underneath the building, again working with existing unused spaces but adding lashings of black Venetian marmorino, back-lit Persian onyx, vertical timber cladding and bespoke wooden furnishings, all made in Italy, to create a clean-lined, luxurious grotto.

The architects then advanced on what was formerly a fitness area, set in a detached villa in the hotel grounds, to create the new T Spa Suite. The space is designed for couples to share their massage moment (with a double treatment room) and comprises a cocoon of vertical wooden strips. The suite also includes a whirlpool, a sauna and a Turkish bath.

Most recently, the hotel has opened its grandest pampering outpost yet, following the refurbishment of its 18th-century, three-storey Villa Emilia, located conveniently next to the existing spa facilities. It offers three further treatment rooms, a hammam, a nail bar, a relaxation room and a specifically created new guest suite. The hammam, realised in flowing white Lasa marble, includes a raised massage platform, a steam room, a sauna, a tub and a rain shower. The villa's beauty area boasts three wood-clad treatment cabins»

**Lashings of black Venetian marmorino,  
back-lit Persian onyx and bespoke wooden  
furnishings create a clean-lined grotto**





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## Global spa round-up

From Mexico to Switzerland, top new spas find inspiration in local ingredients and traditions

With its windswept beaches and immaculate golf courses, Baja California has become one of Mexico's best-loved boltholes. The 33km stretch of coast near Cabo San Lucas is dotted with starry hotels and spas frequented by the Hollywood crowd and intrepid Europeans willing to make the trek. It's worth it. The spa at the old-school Esperanza ([esperanza.aubergeresorts.com](http://esperanza.aubergeresorts.com)) offers modern reworkings of ancient Mexican healing remedies; there's an aloe wrap, a body mask using red clay from the surrounding desert, a coconut and Bajan lime exfoliation, and even a beer and lime facial.

At the nearby One & Only Palmilla ([palmilla.oneandonlyresorts.com](http://palmilla.oneandonlyresorts.com)), where the spa is made up of private villas with secluded courtyards, ingredients are equally indigenous. Compresses made from local herbs, chocolate oil, and obsidian hot stones are all designed to achieve *ma' alob kuxtal* ('wellbeing' in Mayan).

Across the Pacific, at Mi Xun, the spa at the Temple House Hotel in Chengdu ([thetemplehousehotel.com](http://thetemplehousehotel.com)), bespoke bamboo tools are used to exfoliate, cleanse and pamper. Located in a heritage building, the spa offers Parisian Thémaé products made from tea extracts.

Saunas and plunge pools are a highlight at the Chedi Andermatt spa (pictured above; [ghmhotels.com](http://ghmhotels.com)) in Switzerland, which also comes with a scented salt steam bath. Austrian brand Alpienne was called in to create a bespoke range of products based on plants and fruits from the surrounding Alpine slopes.

Last but not least is Matteo Thun's spa for the Richard Meier-designed Falkensteiner Hotel Jesolo ([falkensteiner.com](http://falkensteiner.com)) in Venice. It boasts indoor and outdoor pools and a private beach with outstanding views, while treatments range from bespoke Acquapura facials to cryotherapy. **Emma O'Kelly**



ABOVE, THE WHIRLPOOL TUB IN THE PRIVATE T SPA SUITE BIKINI (JUST SEEN), £740, PART OF 'LES LETTRES D'HERMÈS' SET, BY HERMÈS  
FOR STOCKISTS, SEE PAGE 184  
HAIR & MAKE-UP: CLAUDIA MALAVASI  
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT: TIM VAN DER MOST  
MODEL: YANA PETROVA AT IMG

with teak floors and handcrafted wooden furnishings, while the nail bar, tagged the Mosaico Studio, features a refurbished Venetian mosaic floor. The manicure tables are tailor-made in grey oak, and Venelli Kramer has also found space for a Flexform gold marble table, Minotti armchairs and a Penta chandelier. In the adjoining relaxation room, the original frescoed ceiling, *seminato* flooring and fireplace have all been restored.

The villa also now houses the Suite Emilia, for those who don't want to stray too far from the spa facilities. It offers private access to the spa, and also includes an oversized whirlpool, a double rain shower and its own steam room, all lined in Lasa marble. There's a 20 sq m bedroom with a Simmons BeautyRest bed with handmade capitone headboard and a velvet-lined, recessed day bed, just in case you needed a lie-down after all that scrubbing and steaming. ★

Treatments from €70 – €240. Via Provinciale Regina 8, Tremezzina, tel: 39.03 444 2491, [grandhoteltremezzo.com](http://grandhoteltremezzo.com)

## Patek Philippe

The noteworthy detail of Patek Philippe's iconic 'Calatrava', first imagined in the 1930s, is the beautifully elongated deco dial indices in white gold. As perfect a dress watch as you're ever likely to encounter, the 'Calatrava' is a masterclass in horological purity.

'Calatrava' in white gold, £22,820, by Patek Philippe. Jacket, £1,690 as part of suit; shirt, £210, both by Dunhill

White blue 300gsm paper, by Hieronymus



# Enter the fold

Don dress watches and dinner attire for our intimate soirée. Our invitations, made using paper by Swiss stationer Hieronymus, have a new crease of life

*Photography Ivan Ruberto Watches & jewellery director Caragh McKay  
Fashion Jason Hughes Paper engineer Benja Harney*

## Audemars Piguet

At first glance, the ovoid case of Audemars Piguet's 'Millenary' looks something of an horological oddity. But that's precisely the appeal of this timepiece, designed to fit in a perfect oval along – as opposed to across – the wrist. The aesthetics are further complicated by the multilayered back-to-front movement, which doubles up as the dial design.

'Millenary' in white gold, diamonds and mother of pearl, £44,196, by Audemars Piguet. Jacket, price on request, by Boss

White green 300gsm paper, by Hieronymus

## Zenith

A night-time event requires an up-to-date dress watch. The sunburst polish of Zenith's 'Elite 6150' pearl dial adds the requisite evening sheen; while the ultra-slim case augments the barely-there appeal.

'Elite 6150' in stainless steel with black alligator strap, £5,600, by Zenith.  
Dress, £1,875, by Victoria Beckham

White green 300gsm paper,  
by Hieronymus



## Rolex

This classic dress watch elicits a double-take: its handsome good looks undoubtedly command attention, while its retro form represents a departure from the sporty, metal bracelet styles we typically associate with the Rolex name.

'Cellini Time' in white gold with black dial and alligator strap, £10,150, by Rolex.  
Top, £295; skirt, £325, both by Joseph

White cream 300gsm paper,  
by Hieronymus

### Parmigiani Fleurier

The Swiss manufacturer with the Italian name has a reputation for taking its own route, which is all the more intriguing because of its reputation as the horological restoration house par excellence. That its 'Tonda 1950' incorporates the world's thinnest flying tourbillon with micro motor underlines the expected engineering expertise, but it's the subtly decorative black jade dial that singles this watch out for supreme elegance.

'Tonda 1950 Tourbillon' in white gold with black jade dial, £100,000, by Parmigiani Fleurier. Jacket, £935 as part of suit, by Brooks Brothers. Roll-neck, €129, by Joop!

White blue 300gsm paper, by Hieronymus





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Interiors from Spain

## Hublot

Close inspection of Hublot's core lines reveals a brilliantly curious way with materials and careful attention to form. A case in point is the Swiss watchmaker's 'Classic Fusion', a 45mm model as perfectly at ease in a whisky bar as it is on a polo field. It duly earns the 'modern classic' tag.

'Classic Fusion Power Reserve All Black' in polished ceramic, £12,600, by Hublot. Cardigan, £695; roll-neck, £350, both by Gieves & Hawkes

White red 300gsm paper, by Hieronymus



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## Graff

Diamond-like carbon gives the 'GraffStar Slim Eclipse' blacker-than-black appeal. The faceted bezel is a classic Graff watch design motif, but the black alligator strap makes it a smart as well as sporty option, creating a contemporary evening look.

'GraffStar Slim Eclipse' in titanium black diamond-like carbon, price on request, by Graff, from Harrods. Jacket, £1,395, by Pringle of Scotland. Shirt, £210, by Dunhill. White red 300gsm paper, by Hieronymus.





## Bremont

The only way to work a pilot's watch design beyond a day-duty feel is to opt out of any obvious vintage detailing. Marking its new links to the America's Cup, Bremont's first associated model, the 'AC 1', comes with a subtle dial embossing of the celebratory cup and a dark blue waterproof strap.

'AC 1' in stainless steel with rubber strap, £3,395, by Bremont. Jacket, €349; shirt, €70, both by Joop!

White cream 300gsm paper, by Hieronymus

For stockists, see page 184

Hair: Roger Cho

Make-up: Naomi T Dakuzaku

Manicurist: Ami Streets at LMC Worldwide using Chanel Christmas 2015 and Body Excellence hand cream

Photography assistant: Liberto Fillo

Digital operator: Paul Allister

Fashion assistant: Hangna Koh

Models: Corbin Furstenburg at Established, Jessica Towner at Storm



Visit [Wallpaper.com](http://Wallpaper.com) for more dress watches and a look at our first online watch shoot

## CUT CLASS

Paper engineer Benja Harney shows how to make your own mini-paper dinner jacket



### STEP 01

Take two rectangles of paper and cut out the shapes above. Leave the two bow ties joined in the centre.



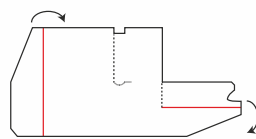
### STEP 02

Fold along the solid red lines, as indicated, to create lapels. Fold the bow ties, one on top of the other.



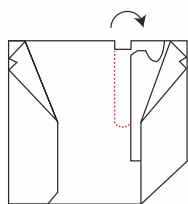
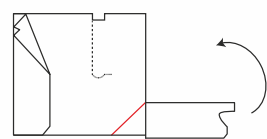
### STEP 03

Make two further folds, as shown by the red lines above, creating the two sides of the jacket front.



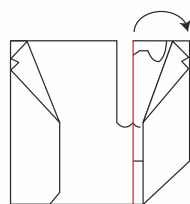
### STEP 04

Fold along the red line to bring up the right lapel.



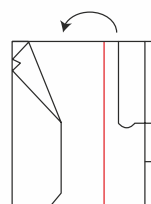
### STEP 05

Fold the previously cut section over to the right, like a shirt front.



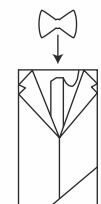
### STEP 06

Now fold back the whole right section as shown.



### STEP 07

Fold forward along the red line indicated, bringing the right side of the jacket to the front again.



### STEP 08

Attach the bow tie and your invitation, or thank-you note, is perfectly dressed.

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## W\* Bespoke Promotion

Inspired by Warden London, a new development at Canary Wharf, Wallpaper\* and landscape architects Camlins created this furnished glasshouse installation at the project show space at the Design Cube by Ballymore



# Urban Oasis

---

Developer EcoWorld Ballymore is setting the standard for Canary Wharf's brave new residential influx. Warden London is a pair of 55- and 50-storey, Mies-influenced cloud-busters designed by Glenn Howells Architects, rising up 183m and offering a total of 624 apartments, each with its own horticulturally-considered outdoor space and sky garden. The brainchild of Ballymore CEO Sean Mulryan and landscape architects Camlins, Warden London is a project conceived from the outside in - the outdoor spaces were central to the concept right from the start. 'London sits on the world stage and is outward-looking,' explains Huw Morgan, creative director at

Camlins. 'The city is populated by global travellers, sophisticated cosmopolitan people, but actually living in London can sometimes feel like a challenge. We decided that with concrete and glass so pervasive in Canary Wharf, the places you tend to remember most are in stark contrast to that.'

Warden London is central to the rapidly evolving Canary Wharf 2.0. Travel from central London to E14 on the super-swift Jubilee line, and in a matter of minutes (it'll be even quicker once the Crossrail link opens in 2019) you've left behind the modern/Victorian low-rise streets of the West End and find yourself in the midst of a truly



futuristic cityscape - waterways, walkways, travel nodes, skyscrapers, world-class shopping malls, convivial communal areas, public art by Ron Arad, William Turnbull and Lynn Chadwick - all clean, slick, efficient and buzzing with work, industry and action. Canary Wharf is changing rapidly. It is becoming a lifestyle destination, not just an office. Now people want to live here too.

'We have identified that people are placing more importance on green space to provide an escape from city life,' says John Mulryan, managing director of Ballymore UK. Inspired by botanist and explorer Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward, who invented a method of transporting

plants across vast distances in his glass 'Wardian' cases, Wardian London will, adds Mulryan, 'take landscaping to the next level, pioneering the kind of outside-in living we've seen in destinations such as Singapore and Brisbane'. The buildings will also offer their residents a private boutique cinema, a wow-view Sky Lounge perfect for post-work sundowners, and a lushly appointed state-of-the-art gym and health club with a 25m outdoor swimming pool. 'We are bringing a green oasis to Europe's leading financial district, providing a sanctuary from city living.'

[wardianlondon.com](http://wardianlondon.com)



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INTRODUCING

## The Fawn Collection

Fawn is a new collection designed by Salih Teskeredžić and Mustafa Čohadžić. When designing this range, they wanted it to replicate characteristics of a fawn – strong but with a swiftness in its appearance.

Fawn Ena **chair** facett grey £225, Fawn **chair** with black webbing £395 and Fawn Tink **table** £1,495.

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DECEMBER IS ALL ABOUT...

We're on a Waugh footing with clinking cocktails, tasty titbits and icy wit—p148  
The OMA-designed Timmerhuis opens in Rotterdam The rescue mission behind Fendi's remarkable Roman HQ—p164 The new Primus Hotel in Sydney revitalises an art deco gem Dining tables for big occasions—p170 Art Basel Miami Beach and Design Miami spark short-term creative migration Calmly assured cruise collections are a form-fitting, slim-line tonic—p174 The Angkor Photo Festival brings international focus to Siem Reap, Cambodia Tom Sachs' flaming baked Alaska—p186

Entertaining

# Cocktail hour

It's time for high spirits and heavenly hors d'oeuvres

*Photography Jean-Pacôme Dedieu Interiors Benjamin Kempton Entertaining director Melina Keays*





This page, 'Colony' tray, €480, by Aldo Cibic, for Paola C, from WallpaperSTORE\*. Trestle, €170, by Aldo Cibic, for Paola C. Monin gomme syrup, £5, from The Whisky Exchange. 'K&P' cocktail shaker, £593, by Christofle, from Harrods. 'Vizner' champagne bowls, £60, by Bomma, from WallpaperSTORE\*. 'Ram Head' decanter, £2,750, by Asprey. Chartreuse, £45, from Berry Bros & Rudd. Star of Bombay gin,

£45, from Selfridges. Brass bowl, £105, by Ilse Crawford, for Georg Jensen, from WallpaperSTORE\*. Rémy Martin 1738 Accord Royal cognac, £60; Grey Goose vodka, £49, both from Selfridges. Vintage coffee pot, £8,000, by Georg Jensen, from Harrods. Landscape, private collection, by Francis Keays. 'Magnolia Ice' rug, £1,620 per sq m, by Vivienne Westwood, from The Rug Company

Previous page, chairs, £2,980, by Meissen, from Harrods. 'Sacristain' side table, £12,390, by Christian Liaigre. 'Voyage en Ikat' dinner plate, £174, by Hermès; cocktail napkins, £25 each, by Gayle Warwick, both from Thomas Goode. 'Mille Nuits' pastry stand, £565, by Baccarat; 'Versailles Aurore' water glass, £120, by Royale de Champagne, from Harrods. 'Chorus' bell, £429, by Bodo Sperlein for Tane. 'Aarne'

cocktail glass, £43, by Iittala, from WallpaperSTORE\*. 'Benin' rug, from £1,305 per sq m, by Marian Pepler, for Christopher Farr. Curtains made from 'Emotion' fabric, £210 per m, by Lelievre. 'Wisteria' wallpaper, £82 per 10m roll, by Cole & Son. 'Light Bronze Green' intelligent eggshell (on skirting), £19 for 1 litre, by Little Greene. For recipes, see page 161

## Entertaining

'Leo' table, £1,900, by Christophe Delcourt, from Willer. 'Glow' lamps, £5,400 each, by Armani Casa. 'Oliver' table, £1,238, by Flexform, from Interdesign. 'Elbeuf' cocktail glasses, £8,340 for six, by Baccarat, from Harrods. 'Cartoccio' bowl, £303, by San Lorenzo, from WallpaperSTORE. 'Guscio' sofa, £8,309, by Antonio Citterio, for Flexform, from Harrods. Cushion fabrics: 'Astrakhan' in Verde, £355 per m, by Colony, with trimming by Dedar; original cushion from sofa; 'Funky Stripes', £171 per m, by Dedar, with trimming by Dedar; 'Jules' in Absinthe, £115 per m, by Pierre Frey, with trimming by Dedar;

'Splendido', £143 per m, by Dedar. *Autumn Landscape with Hills, Spetse*, £45,000, by John Craxton, from Osborne Samuel. 'Ago' table, £4,315, by Carlo Colombo, for Giorgetti, from Mayfair Design Studio. 'Orchestra' plate, £14, by David/Nicolas, for Vista Alegre, from WallpaperSTORE. 'Art Deco Gueridon' table, £7,000, by Jacques Adnet, from Rose Uniacke. Travel notebooks, £205 each, by Bottega Veneta, from Harrods. 'Bowl 1402', £1,430, by Allan Scharff, for Georg Jensen. 'Karabagh Splashed' rug, £1,378 per sq m, by Jan Kath. 'Eau-de-Nil' absolute matt emulsion, £19 for 1 litre, by Little Greene

For recipes, see page 161







Opposite, for full credits,  
see page 184

This page, 'Fri' chair, £2,327, by Jaime Hayon, for Republic of Fritz Hansen. 'Marly' fabric (cushion), £509 per m, by Colony, with trimming by Dedar. 'Catlin' side table, £2,887, by Rodolfo Dordoni, for Minotti. 'Ottagonale' tray, £94, by Alessi, from WallpaperSTORE. 'Marrakech' wine goblet, £144, by Meissen, from Harrods. 'Alistair P' lamp, €1,195, by Jordi Veciana, for Parachilna. *Returning to the Trenches*, £55,000, by Christopher Nevinston, from Osborne Samuel. 'Marly' wallpaper, £23 per roll, by Colony. 'Tumbled Crema Antica' marble tiles with 'Noce' travertine inserts, £120 per sq m, by Lapidica. 'Cupboard Green' absolute matt emulsion (on skirting), £19 for 1 litre, by Little Greene

For recipes, see page 161





## Entertaining

Landscape, private collection, by Francis Keays. 'Bilou Bilou' chairs, £2,196 each, by Romeo Sozzi, for Promemoria. Dining table, 1960s, £2,200, from Paul Smith Albemarle Street. 'Planet Earth' pitcher, €452, by Christian Haas, for Theresienthal. 'Silver Time' basin and ladle, €1,900, by Christofle. 'Everyday Baccarat' tumblers, €390 for six, by Baccarat. 'Planet Earth' tumbler, €250, by Christian Haas, for Theresienthal. 'Cynara' vase, £2,900, by Lalique. Flowers, arranged by Elizabeth Marsh. Peach Murano casket, £780; silver flask, £1,100, both from Guinevere Antiques.

'Budapest T' window handle, £129, by Izé. 'Stephane Gueridon' side table, £2,310, by Francis Sultana. 'Josephine' candle, £60, by Cire Trudon, from WallpaperSTORE. 'Celeste' martini glass, £115, by Ralph Lauren Home. 'Adamo & Eva' cotton velvet (curtains), £109 per m, by Dedar. 'Eau-de-Nil' absolute matt emulsion (on skirting and woodwork), £19 for 1 litre, by Little Greene. 'Tortoise Amazon' wallpaper, £389 per roll, by Schumacher, from Turnell & Gigon. 'Crema Antica Tumbled' marble tiles and 'Noce' travertine inserts, £120 per sq m, by Lapidica. For recipes, see page 161





This page, 'Argo' lamp, £2,000, by Soane. Nest of tables, £3,540 for three, by Andrew and Sarah Hills, for Porta Romana. 'Malachite' candle, £125, by Fornasetti Profumi, from WallpaperSTORE\*. 'Symphony' beakers, from £1,045, by Bodo Sperlein, for Tane. 'Voyage en Ikat' dinner plate, £174, by Hermès, from Thomas Goode. 'Cabrioler' chair, £5,590, by Philippe Nigro, for

Hermès. 'Circuit 24' fabric (cushion), £350 per m, by Hermès, for Dedar, with trimming by Dedar. 'Deco Diamond Light' rug, from £985 per sq m, by Tim Gosling, for The Rug Company

Opposite, 'Simplified Merton' chair, £1,922, by Soane. Ruinart Blanc de Blancs champagne, £60, from Selfridges. Bottle cooler, limited edition, price on request, by

Ron Arad, for Ruinart. 'Alexis' champagne coupes, €109 each, by Theresienthal. 'Asian Dream' plate, €48, by Versace, for Rosenthal. Glass bonbonniere, from £40, by Lyngby Porcelain, from WallpaperSTORE\*. Gilt bronze cranes, £3,200 for pair, from Guinevere Antiques. 'Iconic Heroes' service plate, £170, by Versace, for Rosenthal, from

WallpaperSTORE\*. 'Twig' console table, £3,426, by Andrew and Sarah Hills, for Porta Romana. Oct 62, £75,000, by Roger Hilton, from Osborne Samuel. 'Bidjar Piccadilly Pleasure' rug, €1,836 per sq m, by Jan Kath. 'Ginger Pink' matt emulsion, £39 per 2.5 litres, by Sanderson

For recipes, see page 161



## Entertaining

'Colonne' console, £30,500, by Christian Liaigre. Potpourri jar, £12,000, by Wedgwood & Bentley, for Wedgwood, from Harrods. 'Mini Cuppino', €199, by Aldo Cibic, for Paola C. 'Hemisphere' dinner plate, £62, by JL Coquet, from Willer. 'Domus' cafetière, £85; sugar bowl, £39, both by Nick Munro, from Aram. 'Minerva' candlestick, £2,250, by Wedgwood & Bentley, for Wedgwood, from Harrods. 'Nuovo Milano' dessert forks, £9 each, by Ettore Sottsass, for Alessi. 'Bacchus' bowl, €69, by Theresienthal. 'Lapis' canapé plates, £130 for four, by L'Objet, from WallpaperSTORE\*. 'Masséna' glasses, £160 each, by Baccarat, from Harrods. 'Rockface' wallpaper, £410 per sq m, by Fromental

For recipes, see page 161

For stockists, see page 184

Interiors assistants:  
Chu Goldmann,  
Lisa McKinney





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# CHEF'S SPECIALS

Exquisite cocktails, divine canapés and all that jazz



## White lady

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice, 15ml Cointreau, 60ml gin, 20ml fresh lemon juice and an egg white, shake until cold, and strain into a glass. Serve with a twist of lemon peel on the rim.

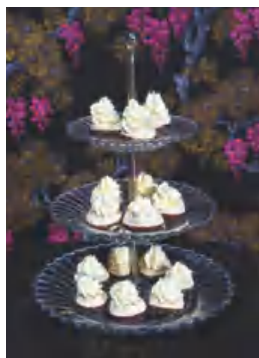


## Matcha financiers

Makes 24

80g unsalted butter  
40g plain flour  
¼ tsp baking powder  
¼ tsp salt  
100g ground almonds  
100g icing sugar  
3 tsp matcha powder  
4 large egg whites or 140g  
1 tbs black sesame seeds  
edible gold leaf

Melt the butter in a pan, then set aside to cool. Put the flour, baking powder, salt, almonds, icing sugar, and matcha in a bowl and stir well. Whisk in the egg whites. Gradually stir in the melted butter to form a smooth, glossy batter. Chill for 20 minutes. Butter the financier tins. Heat the oven to 170°C. Spoon the batter into the tins to two thirds full. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and add a gold leaf flake to each. Bake for 12-15 minutes until firm and beginning to brown.



## Chocolate hazelnut meringues

Makes 25-30

50g blanched hazelnuts  
2 large egg whites  
120g golden caster sugar  
120g dark chocolate  
180ml double cream  
1 tbs icing sugar  
1 tsp vanilla extract

Heat the oven to 170°C. Scatter the hazelnuts on a baking tray and toast for 7-10 minutes until golden brown, keeping a close eye as they burn quickly. Allow to cool, then chop finely in a food processor and set aside. Reduce the oven temperature to 110°C. Place the egg whites in the bowl of an electric mixer and whisk into soft peaks. Add the sugar, a tablespoon at a time, while the mixer is in motion, until you have a stiff, glossy meringue. Fold in the hazelnuts evenly. Spoon the mixture into a piping bag and pipe walnut-sized blobs, 4cm apart, onto baking sheets lined with baking parchment. Using a teaspoon, make an indentation in each, to form a shallow bowl. Place in the oven for 1½ hours until crisp. In a bowl set over a pan of simmering water, melt the chocolate. Carefully dip the base of each meringue into the melted chocolate and place it on some baking parchment to set. Whip the cream into soft peaks. Sprinkle over the icing sugar and vanilla and continue to whip to combine. Spoon into a piping bag and pipe rosettes of whipped cream onto the meringues.



## Crudités with blue cheese

Serves 8-10

200g crème fraîche  
80g mayonnaise  
2 tsp red wine vinegar  
150g blue cheese, crumbled  
2 tbs finely chopped fresh chives  
black pepper  
assorted crudités, such as endive, fennel, radishes and carrots

Spoon the crème fraîche, mayonnaise and vinegar into a bowl and beat with a large fork. Add the blue cheese and mix well, mashing the cheese with the back of the fork until no large lumps remain. Fold in the chives and a good grinding of black pepper. Arrange on a plate with assorted crudités and serve.



## Old fashioned

Squeeze some orange peel to release the oils and rub it around the inside of a whisky tumbler. Leave it in the glass and add 1 tsp gomme syrup, 3 dashes of Angostura bitters and a maraschino cherry. Rotate the glass to line it with the syrup and bitters. Add a large ice cube, and pour in 50ml rye whisky.



## Canapés

### Cucumber cups with crab

2 slim cucumbers  
240g crabmeat, half white and half brown  
1 fresh red chilli, finely chopped  
2 tbs chopped fresh coriander leaves  
juice of ½ lime

Use a peeler to shave 1cm wide strips down the lengths of the cucumbers, creating a striped effect, then slice the cucumbers into 3cm lengths. Using a melon baller or teaspoon, scoop out the centres, leaving a 'base' for the cups. Flake the crabmeat in a bowl with a fork, then add the chilli, coriander and lime juice and mix together well. Place heaped teaspoons of the crab mixture into the cucumber cups.

### Pepperdew peppers stuffed with goat's cheese

400g jar pickled pepperdew peppers  
180g soft goat's cheese, at room temperature  
1 large clove garlic, crushed to a paste under the flat of a knife with ½ tsp salt  
1-2 tbs crème fraîche  
1 tbs finely chopped fresh basil leaves  
salt and black pepper

Remove the peppers from the jar and place, open side down, on paper towels to soak up the excess liquid. Put the goat's cheese, garlic and a tablespoon of crème fraîche in a bowl and mash together well with a fork, adding more crème fraîche if necessary to achieve a firm but creamy consistency. Stir in the chopped basil and season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon into a piping bag and fill the peppers.

### Crostini

slim white baguette  
olive oil

Heat the oven to 180°C. Slice a baguette into 1cm-thick slices. Brush both sides lightly with olive oil and place on a baking tray. Bake for 8-12 minutes until crisp and golden.

### Broad bean crostini

300g broad beans  
1 clove garlic, peeled and roughly chopped  
50ml olive oil  
1 tbs fresh lemon juice  
1 tbs chopped fresh mint  
salt and pepper  
radishes

Bring a large pan of water to the boil, add the broad beans, and cook for about 3 minutes until tender. Drain and leave to cool. Pop the larger beans out of their tough outer skins and place in the bowl of a food processor with the garlic, olive oil, lemon juice and chopped mint. Process until smooth, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Pipe or spoon onto crostini and garnish each with a thin slice of radish.

### Smoked salmon crostini

100g cream cheese  
120g smoked salmon  
1 tbs fresh lemon juice  
1 tbs chopped fresh dill  
black pepper  
1 jar salmon caviar

Place the cream cheese, smoked salmon, lemon juice, chopped dill and a few grinds of black pepper into a food processor and process to a paste. Scoop the salmon paste into a piping bag and pipe onto crostini. Garnish with caviar.



## Brandy punch

Serves 8

400ml brandy  
150ml orange juice  
100ml dark rum  
1 small orange, thinly sliced  
1 litre ginger ale

● Mix the brandy, orange juice and rum in a punch bowl. Add the orange slices and allow to sit for a while. When the hour of hospitality is at hand, pour in the ginger ale and serve over ice.



## Crispy duck pancakes

Makes 30-40 canapés

4 duck leg joints  
3 tsp salt  
2 tbs five spice powder  
1 cucumber  
1 bunch spring onions  
15-20 ready-made Chinese pancakes (available from Chinese grocery stores)  
1 jar hoisin sauce  
1 bunch fresh chives

● Heat the oven to 170°C. Prick the duck all over with a fork. Rub salt on both sides, then dust all over with the five spice powder. Place in a roasting tin and put it in the oven for 1½ hours. Baste the duck with the rendered fat a few times during cooking. Remove

from the oven and allow to rest for 15 minutes. Pull and shred the meat from the bones using two forks. Top and tail the cucumber. Cut into lengths approximately the diameter of the pancakes. Quarter these pieces vertically, and cut away the seeds. Slice into thin julienne strips. Trim the spring onions and slice them into similar julienne strips. Steam or microwave the pancakes according to the manufacturer's instructions. Take a pancake and spread thinly with 1-2 teaspoons of hoisin sauce. Place a generous quantity of shredded duck across the width of the pancake. Place julienned cucumber and spring onion on top. Roll the pancake tightly and tie a piece of chive around the centre of each half. When you have made four or five of these, line them up in a row and cut them all in half with a very sharp knife.



## Chilli lime mayonnaise

1 fresh red chilli, roughly chopped, including seeds  
1 clove garlic, peeled  
2 large egg yolks  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp sugar  
250ml light olive oil  
juice of ½-1 lime

● Put the chilli and garlic in a food processor and chop to a rough paste. Add the egg yolks, salt and sugar, and process until well combined and fairly smooth. Pour the oil into the moving processor in a thin stream. Do this slowly and ensure that the oil is emulsified into the

yolk mixture as you pour. The mixture will become very thick and almost solid. At this point, transfer the mayonnaise to a bowl and whisk in the lime juice by the tablespoon until it has thinned down to a still thick but dropping consistency.



## Ice bowl

2 plastic or metal bowls (the radius of the larger should be approx 3cm greater than the smaller)  
duct tape  
ice cubes  
water  
decoration, such as citrus slices, samphire, leaves and/or flowers

● The ice bowl may be made in any size, as long as it fits into the freezer. Place a few ice cubes in the larger bowl. Place the smaller bowl on top of these to steady and centre it. Fix it in place with duct tape at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock, from inside the rim of the smaller bowl to outside the rim of the larger bowl. Fill the gap with water, about two thirds full. Weigh down the inner bowl with a bag of ice cubes. Insert your choice of decoration between the bowls, such as citrus slices, samphire, leaves and/or flowers. Top up the water – it should be 1cm below the rims of the bowls to allow for ice expansion. Place in the freezer overnight to set. Release the ice bowl by placing the two bowls in a sink full of warm water, with more warm water in the smaller bowl.



## Madeira cake

Serves 10-12

You will need a loaf tin, 18-20cm round tin, or equivalent size bundt tin

200g plain flour  
1½ tsp baking powder  
¼ tsp salt  
50g ground almonds  
175g unsalted butter, softened  
175g caster sugar  
3 large eggs  
zest of 1 lemon  
1 tsp vanilla extract

● Heat the oven to 170°C. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl. Add the salt and ground almonds and stir to combine. Set aside. Place the butter and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer and beat until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, adding a tablespoon of the flour mixture with each egg to prevent curdling. Add the remaining flour in two stages. Add the lemon zest and vanilla. Spoon the batter into the buttered, floured tin, level the top, and bake for 55-60 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 20 minutes before inverting onto a wire rack to cool completely. Serve with mandarins in spiced syrup and whipped cream.



## Mandarins in spiced syrup

Serves 8-12

250ml water  
140g sugar  
4cm piece fresh ginger, peeled and sliced  
3 whole star anise  
1 stick cinnamon  
8-12 mandarin oranges

● Put the water, sugar and spices into a saucepan over a medium heat and bring to the boil, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes until fragrant and syrupy. Turn off the heat and allow to cool as the spices steep in the syrup. Peel the mandarins using a very sharp knife and remove all the white pith. If they are small, leave them whole; otherwise slice them horizontally, across the segments, into three slices each. Place the slices in a bowl and strain the syrup over them. Chill for at least 1 hour before serving with whipped cream on a slice of Madeira cake.

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## Architecture

THIS PICTURE, SILVIA FENDI WITH FENDI CEO PIETRO BECCARI ON THE GLASS-WALLED BRIDGE THAT CONNECTS BECCARI'S THIRD-FLOOR OFFICE WITH THE LIFT CORE OPPOSITE, THE SIX-STOREY PALAZZO HAS A SIMPLIFIED NEOCLASSICAL FACADE WITH ARCHES ON ALL SIDES

Rome's iconic Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana  
is the new home of superbrand Fendi

# EMPIRE BUILDING





Photography Beppe Brancato Writer JJ Martin



In 1938 Benito Mussolini ordered the transformation of 420 acres of lifeless no-man's land five miles outside of Rome's centre into a precinct of skyscrapers and freshly planted trees. Called EUR (Esposizione Universale di Roma), this mini-city was set to play a starring role in Rome's 1942 world fair, the perfect platform for trumpeting the pomp and power of Mussolini's political empire. EUR was the most ambitious architectural scheme of his entire ego-fuelled Fascist regime, and like most despot pet projects, it went up with whizzing speed and efficiency.

The biggest jewel in this cement crown was the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, a magnificent six-storey marble tower featuring a neoclassical facade of never-ending arches with glass and bronze windows that extend across all four of the building's sides. The Second World War ruined Il Duce's carefully hatched plans. The world fair was promptly cancelled, Mussolini was eventually overthrown, and EUR was shut down, leaving its brand new buildings all dressed up with nothing to do.

Since then, this iconic building has been left eerily empty. Over the last seven decades, there have been occasional renters or one-time exhibitors (such as Giorgio Armani) who took temporary residence in Palazzo della Civiltà's enormous interiors. But for the most part, the giant building was left without a heartbeat. Finally, though, it has fittingly glamorous tenants. The Rome-based fashion brand Fendi, led by CEO Pietro Beccari, has completed a full-scale, 18-month restoration, awakening the building from its long sleep and transforming it into its official global headquarters. Every square centimetre of its 20,000 square metres is now in use.

'When Pietro came to me with this idea, I said, "You have got to be kidding me"', says a beaming Silvia Fendi from her new glass-walled office on the sixth floor of the building. 'For us, it would be like having our offices inside the Trevi Fountain. That's how "Roman monument" this palazzo is.'

To some extent, it does appear as though Silvia (granddaughter of Edoardo and Adele Fendi, who founded the famous fur and leather label in 1925, and daughter of Anna,

who along with her four sisters made the brand globally famous) and her team are actually working outside under Rome's fierce blue sky and sun. All six storeys of the Palazzo are bathed in celestial light, which pours through the space from the building's endless rows of 9m-tall windows. There are no walls where you would expect to have them, and there are as many outdoor, grandly arched promenades as a masterpiece Renaissance palazzo.

'This place was never designed to house offices,' points out Marco Costanzi, the project architect. 'It was conceived as a show space to exhibit things, specifically [the work of] Italian artisans. So the spaces are immense, infinite.'

Originally designed by a trio of Italian architects, Giovanni Guerrini, Ernesto Bruno Lapadula and Mario Romano, the palazzo was the prized flagship of EUR, and was initially conceived to host the world fair's main exhibitions inside its towering walls. But the architects disowned the building after the fussy Mussolini made one too many tweaks to their original plans, including banishing a series of ramp walkways that connected the floors ('it looked like a square Guggenheim inside', remarks Costanzi), reducing the number of arches on the facade, and cancelling the sculpture row that wrapped around the building's central belly.

Even with these changes, the building is still delightful. The 28 3m-high statues, each representing a different industry or trade (from architects and archaeologists to printers and philosophers), were positioned around the base of the building to allow for closer viewing and a connection to its Italian inscription which translates as 'A nation of poets, of artists, of heroes, of saints, of

thinkers, of scientists, of navigators, of travellers'. An outdoor colonnade that wraps around every floor on each side of the building and offers 360-degree views of downtown Rome (including St Peter's Basilica), the suburbs, and the seaside, now makes for one of the greatest staff smoking areas in the history of offices. Although it also boasts one of the best places to take in a Roman sunset, much of this building's beauty – its acres of endless polished red marble floors, thick white marble walls and soaring open ceilings – presented construction challenges for its first full-time tenants.

'There was literally nothing inside this building – no water, no electricity, no mechanical systems,' explains Costanzi, who also designed Fendi's fashion show space inside the Arnaldo Pomodoro Foundation, Milan. 'We had to rebuild everything. It was an enormous job.'

The construction team brought in miles of electric wiring and plumbing, and hid the evidence under new dark wood floor panels so as not to hammer into the building's original red marble floors. On the ground floor, which will soon feature a café, bookstore and public exhibition space, marble had to literally be shaved off the walls and then rebolted back on to cover intricate technical panels. To create efficient working spaces for over 400 people within, Costanzi designed a system of transparent glass cubes for offices and meeting rooms on the top five floors that preserve the original flow of light and unobstructed views throughout the building. Curtains can be pulled across for privacy. 'But all of this can be dismantled, and you can return to the original building,' he says.

The central core of the Palazzo della Civiltà always was, and still is, an empty >>

**An outdoor colonnade that wraps around every floor, and offers 360-degree views of Rome, now makes for one of the greatest staff smoking areas in the history of offices**



FENDI'S OPERATIONS, NOW UNITED UNDER A SINGLE ROOF, INCLUDE OPEN-PLAN OFFICES, THE VISUAL MERCHANDISING TEAM'S CREATIVE SPACES, AND THE READY-TO-WEAR ATELIER



## Architecture

THIS PICTURE, ON THE ROOF OF THE PALAZZO OPPOSITE, 3M-HIGH STATUES REPRESENT DIFFERENT TRADES, WHILE THE BUILDING'S INSCRIPTION READS 'A NATION OF POETS, OF ARTISTS, OF HEROES, OF SAINTS, OF THINKERS, OF SCIENTISTS, OF NAVIGATORS, OF TRAVELLERS'



square chute and another natural light source. But a new glass-walled bridge has been built to connect Beccari's third floor office with the lift core, creating a James Turrell-esque effect when one looks up and sees a square slice of bright blue Roman sky. 'It's very metaphysical, like a de Chirico painting,' the CEO remarks. 'You know where you are and what time it is.'

The size of the new headquarters means that once-disparate company parts are

now operating in the same space, including a fur atelier housing 50 artisans in the basement and open-plan meeting areas and offices, as well as room to house Fendi's massive archives, a stock warehouse, and a museum. On the ground floor, the visual merchandising team has its own pop-up shop test spaces, formally housed in an off-site warehouse, while Fendi creative director Karl Lagerfeld has his temporary office on the sixth floor. 'The major goal

here was to unite everyone,' explains Beccari. 'When I first came to Fendi, you had all the marketing, merchandising and product people in the Palazzo Fendi, but then you had all the functional support, IT and the supply chain [30 minutes away] in Flaminia.'

Amassed under a single roof, Fendi now looks like the beefed-up fashion empire it actually is and these new architectural muscles mirror the momentum of the brand. 'We're achieving double digit growth,' Beccari

VN POPOLO DI POETI DI ARTISTI DI EROI  
DI SANTI DI PENSATORI DI SCIENZIATI  
DI NAVIGATORI DI TRASMIGRATORI



reports of the 80-year-old company, which also just held its first haute-couture show dedicated to fur in Paris.

‘Wherever you go you feel like people are wearing Fendi, they’re posting Fendi. When you do something with the maison, it affects everything – our presence on the internet, our [Rome] headquarters, our new place for the fashion shows, our new stores, it all goes together,’ Beccari says. Without disclosing figures, he admits the project

cost ‘much less than you would think’ and ‘way below the €15,000 a square metre’ that most fashion ateliers use as a benchmark. ‘It’s a miracle when you think about how beautiful this looks,’ he says.

Aside from the sheer size and presence of the palazzo, there is also an uplift in energy that electrifies visitors as well as the company’s own employees when they walk into a space that feels like it’s suspended in the sky. And there’s a certain full-circle

serendipity that comes from knowing that a building that was meant to showcase Italian artisans is now finally being activated and filled with people who actually work with their hands.

‘Having our fur atelier on site is such a privilege,’ says Silvia Fendi. ‘You can have an idea, sketch it out on paper, take it downstairs and the next day have something made. For a brand like us that does a lot of experimentation, that’s a true luxury.’ ★

In The Market For...

**POLIFORM**

**Founded: 1970**

**Based: Inverigo, Italy**

'Blade' table, from £7,340,  
by CR & S Varenna,  
for Poliform

# High table

Come dine at our infinitely superior supper club

*Photography Kate Jackling Interiors Maria Sobrino*



**MINOTTI**

**Founded: 1950s**

**Based: Meda, Italy**

'Morgan' table, £10,665,  
by Rodolfo Dordoni,  
for Minotti

## In The Market For...

'28 C 04'; '10 D 03' absolute matt emulsion, £37 per 2.5 litres, both by Little Greene. 'Jamaican Ginger 2'; 'Soft Fauna 1'; 'Dusted Moss 1' matt emulsion, £24.50 per 2.5 litres, all by Dulux

**NIKARI**  
Founded: 1967  
Based: Fiskars, Finland

'Edi' table, from £3,690,  
by Claesson Koivisto  
Rune, for Nikari

**VITRA**  
Founded: 1950  
Based: Weil am Rhein,  
Germany

'Belleville' table, £2,362,  
by Ronan and Erwan  
Bouroullec, for Vitra





**GUBI**  
**Founded: 1967**  
**Based: Copenhagen, Denmark**

'Moon' table, £5,049,  
by Space Copenhagen,  
for Gubi

**PORADA**  
**Founded: 1968**  
**Based: Cabiato, Italy**

'Desco' table, from €3,678,  
by U Asnago, for Porada

'28 C 04'; '10 D 03' absolute  
matt emulsion, £37 per 2.5 litres,  
both by Little Greene. 'Jamaican  
Ginger 2'; 'Winter Teal 1';  
'Dusted Moss 1' matt emulsion,  
£24.50 per 2.5 litres, all by Dulux

For all stockists, see page 184

## In The Market For...

**CAPPELLINI**  
**Founded: 1946**  
**Based: Milan**

'Vendome' table,  
from £11,772,  
by Giulio Cappellini,  
for Cappellini

**LIVING DIVANI**  
**Founded: 1970s**  
**Based: Anzano del  
Parco, Italy**

'Brasilia' table, price on  
request, by David Lopez  
Quincoces, for Living Divani



**PORRO**  
**Founded: 1925**  
**Based: Carimate, Italy**

'Ellipse' table, €4,749,  
by Front, for Porro



# Slim line

Figure-hugging forms frame this year's  
cruise collections

*Photography* Joachim Mueller-Ruchholtz  
*Fashion* Jason Hughes

This page, jacket,  
£1,940; trousers, £585,  
both by **Saint Laurent**  
by **Hedi Slimane**.  
Shoes, €680, by **Céline**.  
Necklace, £3,897, by  
**Maison Margiela Fine**  
**Jewellery**. Ring, £300,  
by **Charlotte Chesnais**

'Krusin' side chair, £495,  
by **Marc Krusin**, for  
**Knoll**, from **Chaplins**

Opposite, top, £1,264,  
by **Chanel**. Earrings,  
£290, by **Marni**

## Fashion

This page, top, £2,300;  
skirt, £1,660, both  
by **Louis Vuitton**

Opposite, top, £845;  
skirt, £1,845, both by  
**Calvin Klein Collection**.  
Shoes, €680, by **Céline**.  
Bracelet, £175, by  
**Uncommon Matters**









Opposite, jacket, £580; skirt, price on request, both by **Boss**. Necklace, £470, by **Dior**. Bracelet, €780; shoes, €680, both by **Céline**

Above left, dress, £3,235, by **Prada**. Necklace, £3,897, by **Maison Margiela Fine Jewellery**

Above right, dress, £1,590, by **Victoria Beckham**. Earrings, £290, by **Marni**

## Fashion



Above left, top, £270; skirt, £215, both by **Sportmax**

Above right, coat, £3,110, by **Bottega Veneta**. Earrings, £290, by **Marni**

Opposite, top, €2,220; trousers, €1,500; shoes, €680, all by **Céline**. Earrings, £290, by **Marni**





## Fashion

Opposite, jacket, £1,800; trousers, £1,450; necklace, £470, all by **Dior**. Ring, £300, by **Charlotte Chesnais**. Shoes, €680, by **Céline**

'CH88' chair, £354, by **Hans J Wegner**, for **Carl Hansen & Søn**

This page, jacket, £1,315, by **Balenciaga**. Earrings, £290, by **Marni**. Bracelet, £175, by **Uncommon Matters**

For stockists, see page 184

Shot on location at Covert House, London, by DSDHA, [dsdha.co.uk](http://dsdha.co.uk). Thanks to Deborah Saunt and David Hills

Hair: Mari Ohashi at LGA Management

Make-up: Mel Arter at CLM using MAC

Manicure: Saffron Goddard using Chanel Christmas 2015 and Body Excellence Hand Cream

Photography assistants: Samuel Hearn, Tom Alexander

Digital operator: Guillaume Blondiau

Fashion assistant: Hangna Koh

Hair assistant: Kiyoko Odo

Model: Laura Kampman at Select

Casting: Elizabeth Goldson at AM Casting



# Stockists

A

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net-a-porter.com

**Albion Wine Shippers**  
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albionwineshippers.co.uk

**Alessi**  
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alessi.com

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thealfredcollection.com

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armanicasa.com

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**Audemars Piguet**  
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B

**Baccarat**  
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**Bremont**  
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**Brooks Brothers**  
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brooksbrothers.com

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**Calvin Klein Collection**  
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calvinklein.com

**Cappellini**  
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cappellini.it

**Carl Hansen & Son**  
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carlhansen.com

**Céline**  
celine.com

**Chanel**  
Tel: 44.20 7493 5040 (UK)  
chanel.com

**Chaplins**  
Tel: 44.20 8421 1779 (UK)  
chaplins.co.uk

**Charlotte Chesnais at Matches**  
Tel: 44.20 7022 0828 (UK)  
matchesfashion.com

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christian-liaigre.fr

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gubi.com

**Guinevere**  
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houseoffraser.co.uk

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hublot.com

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interdesignuk.biz

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ize.info

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jan-kath.de

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jilsander.com

**Joop!**  
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joop.com

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lalique.com

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laperla.com

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lapicida.com

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lelievre.eu

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matchesfashion.com

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leo-hillinger.com

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liberty.co.uk

**Linley**  
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davidlinley.com

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littlegreene.com

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livingdivani.it

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louisvuitton.co.uk

M

**Maison Margiela Fine Jewellery at Dover Street Market**  
Tel: 44.20 7518 0680 (UK)  
doverstreetmarket.com

**Margaret Howell/MHL by Margaret Howell**  
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margarethowell.co.uk

**Marni**  
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marni.com

**Mayfair Design Studio**  
Tel: 44.20 7499 7133 (UK)  
mayfairdesignstudio.com

**Meissen**  
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meissen.com

**Minotti**  
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minotti.com

**Moncler**  
Tel: 44.20 7235 0857 (UK)  
moncler.com

**Montgolfier**  
Tel: 33.2 41 18 09 39 (France)  
montgolfier.fr

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**Nikari**  
Tel: 358.10 315 1310 (Finland)  
nikari.fi

**Normann Copenhagen**  
Tel: 45.35 55 44 59 (Denmark)  
normann-copenhagen.com

O

**Osborne Samuel**  
Tel: 44.20 7493 7939 (UK)  
osbornesamuel.com

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**Paola C**  
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paolac.com

**Parachilna**  
Tel: 34.936 307 772 (Spain)  
parachilna.eu

**Parmigiani Fleurier**  
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parmigiani.ch

**Patek Philippe**  
patek.com

**Paul Smith**  
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paulsmith.co.uk

**Pierre Frey**  
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pierrefrey.com

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R

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rosenthal.de

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therugcompany.com

**Ruinart**  
ruinart.com

## NEXT MONTH

# Next Generation

Do you know how the world will look in five years? What odd behaviours will be commonplace, or how the home and office will have morphed? Nor us. But we can bring you the young talents who will make it happen. Your future is in their hands.

## ON SALE 10 DECEMBER



Coat, £2,630; jacket, £2,090; cardigan, £1,140; trousers, £790; boots, £1,060, all by **Ermenegildo Zegna Couture**, see page 061

W

**WallpaperSTORE\***  
store.wallpaper.com

**The Whisky Exchange**  
Tel: 44.20 8838 9388 (UK)  
thewhiskyexchange.com

**Willer**  
Tel: 44.20 7937 3518 (UK)  
willer.co.uk

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**Zenith**  
Tel: 44.1204 424 051 (UK)  
zenith-watches.com

**Zoffany**  
Tel: 44.1895 221000 (UK)  
zoffany.com

#### Cocktail hour, page 152

**Top shelf**, 'Fox' tumbler, £470 for pair, from Asprey. 'Montgomery' cocktail shaker, £195, by Ralph Lauren Home. 'Stag' tumbler, £470 for pair, from Asprey. 'Château Baccarat' champagne flute, £76; red wine glass, £76, both by Baccarat. 'Dagny' tumblers, £115, by Ralph Lauren Home. 'Vega' highball, £120 for pair, by Baccarat. Owl pepper mill, part of set, £7,350, by Asprey. 'Harcourt 1841', £145, by Baccarat. 'Elbeuf' cocktail glass, £8,340 for set of six, by Baccarat, from Harrods. 'Heritage' aromatic candle, £320, by Baccarat. **Middle shelf**, 'Vega' martini glass, £110; 'Masséna' glasses, £160 for pair; 'Vega' champagne flute, £105, all by Baccarat. 'Horse' tumbler, £470 for pair, from Asprey. 'Bartholdi' decanter, £375; 'Bartholdi No. 1' water goblet, £110; 'Bartholdi No. 2' wine glass, £85; 'Bartholdi No. 3' bourgogne glass, £85 all by Saint Louis, from Harrods. 'Dagny' water goblets, £145 each; wine glasses, £140 each; champagne saucers, £150 each, all by Ralph Lauren Home. **Bottom shelf**, 'Dagny' highballs, £125 each, by Ralph Lauren Home. 'Shivers Owl', £175; 'Diamant' water glasses, £75 each, all by Lalique. 'Tulip' flutes, £21 each, by Aldo Cibic, from Paola C. **Glass bonbonniere**, from £40, by Lyngby Porcelain, from Wallpaper\* STORE. '100 Points' tumblers, £110 for pair, by James Suckling, for Lalique. 'Tommy' cocktail shaker, £475, by Saint Louis, from Harrods. '100 Points' universal glass, £90; burgundy glass, £95, both by James Suckling, for Lalique. 'Amor Libre' fabric (background), £114 per m, by Dedar

S

**Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane**  
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ysl.com

**Sanderson**  
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sanderson-uk.com

**Selfridges**  
Tel: 44.113 369 8040 (UK)  
selfridges.com

**Sigmar**  
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sigmarlondon.com

**Skandium**  
Tel: 44.20 7584 2066 (UK)  
skandium.com

**Soane**  
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soane.co.uk

**Sportmax**  
Tel: 44.20 7499 7902 (UK)  
sportmax.com

**Stone Island**  
Tel: 44.20 7287 7734 (UK)  
stoneisland.co.uk

T

**Theresienthal**  
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theresienthal.de

**Thomas Goode**  
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thomasgoode.com

**Tom Dixon**  
Tel: 44.20 3696 4950 (UK)  
tomdixon.net

**Tommy Hilfiger**  
Tel: 44.20 3144 0900 (UK)  
tommy.com

**Turnell & Gigon**  
turnellandgigongroup.com

U

**Uncommon Matters**  
uncommonmatters.com

V

**Victoria Beckham**  
Tel: 44.20 7501 1122 (UK)  
victoriabeckham.com

**Victorinox**  
Tel: 44.20 7647 9070 (UK)  
victorinox.com

**Vitra**  
Tel: 41.61 377 1747 (Switzerland)  
vitra.com

# TOM SACHS'

## Baked Alaska

Among the sculptor Tom Sachs' cultural appropriations, remixes and samplings (such as a McDonald's on wheels, a cardboard Chanel chainsaw and an Unité d'Habitation cut from foamcore), space exploration, in its Cold War pomp, has remained a constant. In 2007, his exhibition 'Space Program' included a scale-model lunar landing module and a mission control with dozens of video monitors. His sculptural borrowings are never quite perfect, so that he can show his working - and get to place a vodka bar in the Lunar Excursion Module. His take on a Baked Alaska, the Fiery Re-entry Descent Dessert, is proof we should ask more space-obsessed sculptors for their fave recipes. He suggests Sara Lee all-butter pound cake to form the insulation tiles and has Bacardi 151 providing the pyrotechnics. Best served wearing Tyvek space mittens. ✱

'Sunny Day' plate, €30,  
by Thomas, from  
Rosenthal, rosenthal.de



### FIERY RE-ENTRY DESCENT DESSERT

1 pint Häagen-Dazs  
vanilla ice cream

A small piece of AC  
fir plywood

1 Sara Lee all-butter  
pound cake

5 large egg whites

1 pinch cream of tartar

100g (¾ cup) of sugar

1 shot (1.5oz) Bacardi 151

**Step 1** Set the freezer to its coldest setting. Put the vanilla ice cream on the plywood sheet. Wrap in thin plastic wrap. Smooth out air bubbles by hand. Place on the bottom shelf of the freezer overnight.

**Step 2** Remove the plastic wrap. Slice the pound cake into 2cm-thick slices - these are your 'heat insulation' tiles. Tessellate tiles to form insulation shield surrounding the entire command module-shaped ice cream core. Wrap in plastic again and put back in the freezer while you are working on step 3.

**Step 3** Beat the egg whites and cream of tartar into a thick froth. Gradually add sugar and beat until it's very thick and can hold a peak.

**Step 4** Remove the plastic wrap. Trowel the mixture onto the insulation tiles. This is your 'heat shield'.

**Step 5** Warm the Bacardi 151 in a small saucepan at low temperature on stovetop or in the microwave. Be careful not to evaporate alcohol. It's best to rehearse this step.

**Step 6** Place the entire Re-entry Vehicle Assembly in a pre-heated 260°C (500°F) oven. Bake for about 8-10min, and remove when the peaks are golden-brown.

**Step 7** Turn off the lights in the dining area.

**Step 8** Pour liquor over vehicle, ignite and serve.

**Tip** Plan your movement path. Rehearse service sequence for a successful fiery re-entry and splashdown.

**Variant** Use American flag toothpicks to simultaneously show patriotism and dissent.



TERESA

DESIGN ROBERTO LAZZERONI  
2015

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